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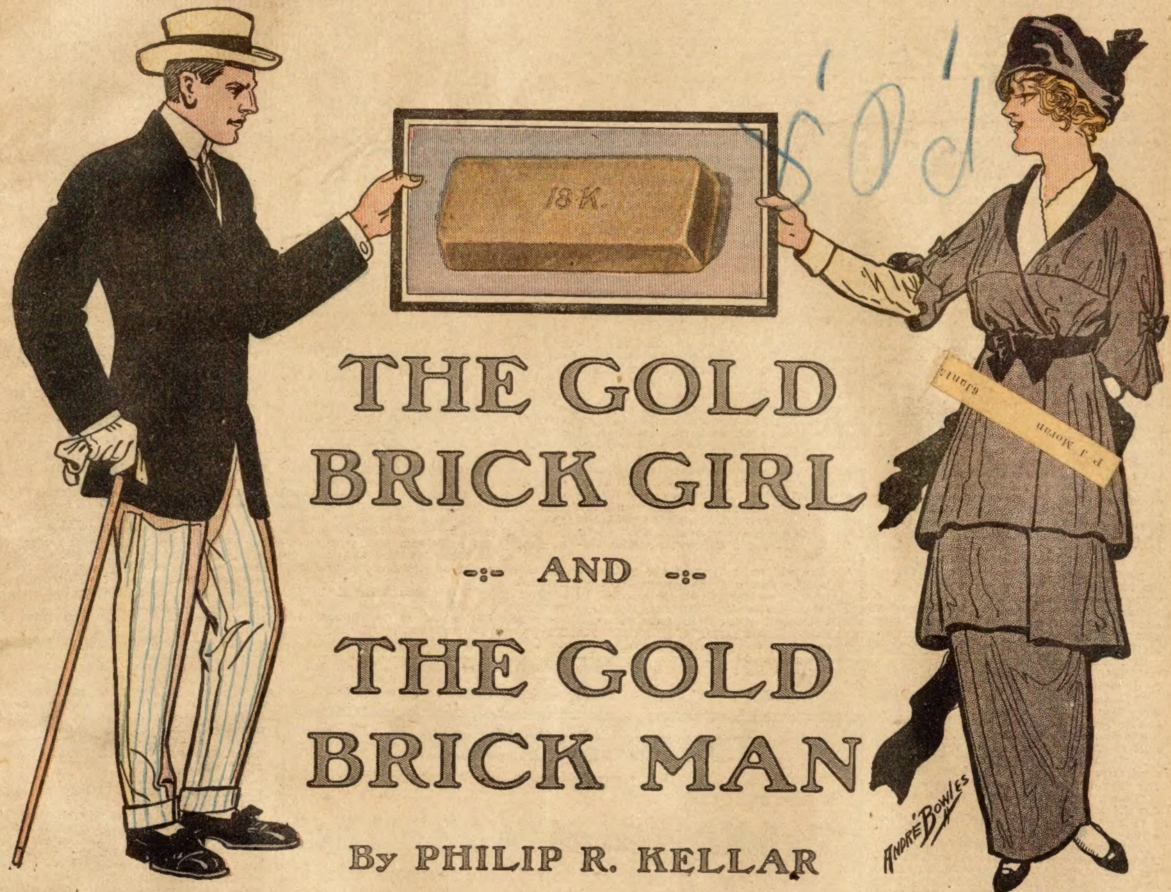
CHICAGO LEDGER

VOL. XLII. NO. 31. CHICAGO, ILL., SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 1914. SINGLE COPIES 5 CENTS



THE GOLD BRICK GIRL

AND

THE GOLD BRICK MAN

By PHILIP R. KELLAR

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BY PHILIP R. KELLAR

CHAPTER I.

J. RANDOLPH BREWSTER, alias Con Brewer, one time gold-brick man, strolled from the lobby to the spacious veranda of the De Soto Hotel, carefully placed a green rocking chair where it commanded a view of Bull street to the north, and seated himself with a sigh of lazy contentment. Nearly every evening for six months he had occupied this position from six to seven o'clock, watching the stream of men and women returning home from their work, pulsating southward along the street which bears the name of the Colonial fighter and on towards Forsythe Park. He enjoyed watching the human panorama, and the almost continuous banging of the electric piano in the ice-cream parlor on the opposite corner had been unable to destroy this relish.

J. Randolph Brewster, plainly a gentleman, faultlessly attired, possessing a poise that was the envy of all men who came in contact with him, had arrived in Savannah the previous autumn, and had remained while the autumn changed to winter and the winter to spring. An athletic-looking, well-built man, with a clean, clear-cut, strong face—handsome because of its strength rather than the regularity of its features, Brewster had been the recipient of many admiring glances from feminine eyes. Upon the strength of his name, which vaguely suggested a line of forbears of honor, and the additional strength of his gentlemanly qualities, he had been able in the course of a few months to have himself accepted by the good people of the old Georgian city as a man qualified by birth and breeding to be received at face value.

To all inquiries of a more or less personal nature he had returned laughingly evasive answers. He was not in Savannah on business, but solely to enjoy the delight of living in the beautiful old city for a few months while he forgot about his business in Virginia. Even his flirtations were innocuously mild and evasive. Apparently the only thing to interest him was to do nothing, but to do it as a gentleman should.

As J. Randolph flicked the ashes from the gold-tipped, monogrammed cigarette, tapped the heel of his shoe with his slender cane, and watched the people homeward bound, he sighed. He was beginning to become bored with himself and the monotony of his existence.

"Four thousand two hundred dollars left of my roll," he said to himself. "Enough to run me another six months on the Gentleman's Special. But is the game worth the trouble? Five years of it has made me letter perfect in the part, but what's the use?"

He shook his head and stared moodily at the passing human stream. An underporter, armed with long-handled dust-broom and triangular-shaped pan, approached, eyed the litter of tobacco ashes, matches, and slips of paper near Brewster's chair, glanced at the man's face, and silently moved around in a half-circle to avoid disturbing him. Brewster was treated with great deference by the generously tipped employes.

The untiring electric piano was mechanically grinding out its repertoire for the hundredth time that day. A young woman—a girl—crossed the intersecting Liberty street and approached the ice-cream parlor. Brewster's wandering glance saw her, and without apparently looking, noted that she carried a stenographic note-book, that her trim figure was clothed in a well-worn dark dress, that her pretty feet were encased in much worn and frequently polished shoes, that her dark hair betrayed a suspicion of natural curliness despite the artificiality of its dressing, and that the round, childishly innocent face had a patently natural, healthful bloom of color.

Brewster idly speculated upon the whim of fancy that caused him to single out this retiring figure from the many, but the fact that he had done so increased his interest and caused him to watch her even more closely. In front of the ice-cream parlor, with its floor level with the street and its long glass doors opened, she paused momentarily, turned east, and came toward the hotel. Brewster decided that she seemed worried.

The girl turned south again when she reached the walk, and Brewster leaned forward slightly as she came toward him. He pretended to be watching the gold fish in the little pond between the walk and the veranda wall, and did not look at the girl again until she was almost in front of him. He lifted his gaze and looked deep into a pair of rich brown eyes. Her innocent, inquiring look startled him; his earnest and unconcealed admiration startled her. Her face flushed to a deeper pink, and she hurried on. Brewster thought of her as a hunted, fearful mite of humanity, and the brown eyes were present with him through his evening meal and far into the night.

The next afternoon, Wednesday, Brewster was at his veranda lookout station half an hour earlier than usual. He could not remember having noticed the girl of the brown eyes before the previous day, and decided he might have missed her because she left her work earlier. That afternoon and the next, Thursday, the girl appeared at the same time, and followed the same course that she had followed on Tuesday. Brewster thought that he held her glance a trifle longer the third day, and that in the eyes appeared a half-pleading, half-hunted look. He risked a bow, so slight that it might be noticed or ignored, and felt a vague thrill when she almost stopped and replied with a faint smile of trustful hesitation.

"She's either a very innocent or a devilishly clever little girl," Brewster told himself, as he watched her disappear between the trees of the little park square at the southern corner of the hotel. Later he told himself with some seriousness that it would be wise for him to forget Brown Eyes. He had conquered the suggestion that he might follow her, when it had come on the first day. Though it returned with increased aggressiveness this afternoon, he still retained sufficient control over himself to push it quickly in the background of his consciousness.

J. Randolph Brewster was not a 'ladies' man." Painful experiences in past years had left him with a vivid memory of direful results following misplaced confidences in the feminine nature. So the animus of his self-control was caution as well as principle.

The next day he was strangely restless, so much so, in fact, that he decided to bring to a close his lazy sojourn in Savannah, and start North at once. He was tempted to make an effort to learn the identity of the girl of the brown eyes, but the matter of following her home or prying into her business life was too distasteful. He did decide, however, to have one more look into her eyes from the veranda that afternoon, and leave the city early Saturday morning. He laughed at himself because the girl had taken such a strong hold upon his imagination.

She appeared much later than the usual time. Dusk had come, and Brewster had given up hope of seeing her, when she came across Liberty street. Before reaching the curb she stopped as if in terror, and hurried diagonally across toward the hotel. Brewster saw a man come from the ice-cream parlor, start after her, return, and watch her. When the girl started south along the east side of Bull street, the man started south on the opposite side, keeping pace with her.

As the girl passed Brewster, she looked up so pleadingly and so fearfully that the man grew indignant at the fellow across the street, and wished he might see him clearly enough to recognize him.

J. Randolph Brewster watched the pair disappear. He shook the ashes from his cigarette, rapped the heel of his shoe with his cane, started to rise and follow them, then settled back in the chair with a cynical smile.

"Steady there," he said to himself. "You know you're no lady's man, and you know you don't want to butt in where you've no business, even if she has got the greatest little pair of come-on eyes you ever saw. Just be careful."

Ten minutes later he threw his cigarette away, arose with a determined air, and started walking rapidly south in Bull street. When he reached the park, he slackened his pace and almost strolled through the park and the parade ground beyond, following the wide walk through the center. In the crowd going with him and passing him and crossing his path, he saw no sign of the girl and her pursuer. At the south end of the parade ground he turned and started back, leaving the center walk when he reached the park, and wandering along the side paths under the live oaks and magnolias.

The twilight was darkening when he discovered the girl and the man, seated on a bench partially concealed from the passers-by by shrubbery and vines. As he approached he heard the man speaking in a stern whisper and the girl answering with a voice of plaintive pleading and softness. Even in the midst of his indignation Brewster noted that her voice was musically sweet in spite of the note of dread in it. Brewster quickened his pace when he saw the man arise and stand over the girl in a threatening attitude.

"I tell you, Alice, you've got to give it to me!" the man growled. "You've got to do what I say! You can't escape me!"

"Please let me alone," she pleaded, cowering beneath him.

Brewster, angry, indignant, retained his calmness, quickened his step to a half-trot, and approached them rapidly. "Beauty in distress," he murmured cynically. "And I suppose I am cast for the part of the fall guy, but here goes."

"Come, give it to me!" the man ordered.

"I'll not!" the girl replied, with a show of spirit.

The man raised his hand menacingly. At the same instant Brewster's right had reached out of the shadows behind him and clutched the man's wrist with a grip that caused him instantly to writhe with pain. Brewster gave the arm another twist, turned the man around, used his foot quickly and heavily.

"You'd better be going—back," Brewster said, with smiling calmness. "You'd better start now—before I lose my temper."

The man stood defiantly, then remembered the strong clasp of the fingers upon his wrist, and turned and slouched away. Brewster turned to the girl, who had arisen and was looking gratefully and fearfully at him.

"Now, Miss Brown Eyes," he said gently, "I think you can go home undisturbed by that fellow."

She held both hands toward him and murmured gratefully, "Thank you, Mr. Brewster."

"Oh, you know who I am!" He did not conceal his surprise, but in the question was another and more cynical questioning.

"Of course," she answered, with a frankness that disarmed him of his momentary suspicion. "Haven't I seen you nearly every day for weeks on the hotel piazza?"

"But my name isn't written anywhere on my face or clothes," he protested.

"You forget that Savannah isn't such a big city and that people talk," she answered smilingly.

"That's so." He liked her quickness, but this show of a new phase of her nature caused him a passing regret for the disappearance of the clinging dread that had at first aroused his interest. "It is growing late," he continued, with the hope of recalling her dependence. "Perhaps I had better walk with you to your home for fear that man may be waiting for you." She started to protest about the trouble to him, but he interrupted, "Now it isn't any trouble. On the contrary, it will be a distinct pleasure, and besides, I consider it my duty to complete what I have begun."

"I—I——"

"Who is he?" Brewster demanded.

"My uncle—my father's brother."

Brewster whistled. It was worse than he had feared. A family quarrel, and he had interfered. At that moment he mentally scolded himself for being so many kinds of a fool. The girl's hand touched his arm, very gently, with mingled apprehension and trustfulness.

"I am afraid of him," she whispered. The look of vague dread came over her face again in full force, and half unconsciously Brewster pressed his arm against his side, imprisoning the hand with a reassuring pressure. "He is trying to make me give him everything my father left me," she continued, as they began to walk. "He has been hunting for me for three months."

"But you just said that Savannah isn't such a large city, and three months seems a long time for a man to find a girl who is working here." Brewster's suspicions were again aroused.

"He didn't know I was here," the girl answered innocently. "He went to the hills in North Georgia, beyond Gainesville, to find me. That is where my father lived—he was a sort of a missionary among the mountain folks. Uncle Jim came up just after father died and tried to make me and Aunt Mary—she is my mother's older sister—give him all of father's property. But we ran away with it—pretending we were going North, but coming back from Baltimore by boat to Savannah. Aunt Mary had a little home here, and I found some work to do."

It sounded very plausible, Brewster decided, until he thought of the property, so desirable and yet in such small bulk that two women could carry it about the country with them. He checked the impulse to ask the nature of his proportion, thinking a more favorable time would come later.

"And now, Miss Alice"—he paused to give her an opportunity to tell him her surname, but she remained silent—"now that he has found you, why not appeal to the police and have them protect you."

"Oh, no!" Her shudder of dread was plainly felt by his arm, in which still rested her hand. "I am afraid. You don't know Uncle Jim. All my life my father warned me against him. He would do anything for money, though he pretends to be such a good church member."

"Huh, that sort!" Brewster spoke disdainfully.

"If I could only convert the property into money and get just four thousand dollars!" Brewster's muscles started at her mention of almost the exact sum he still possessed. "We could pay the small mortgage on Aunt Mary's home and with my work and the little income from the balance, we could get along very comfortably and be free from Uncle Jim's greediness."

"Where is this home?" Brewster asked for the sake of time to think it over.

"On West Thirty-third street, just about a mile from here," she answered quickly.

"And what is the nature of your property—what your father left you?"

"Why, I'm almost afraid to tell you here, Mr. Brewster," she replied in a whisper. She looked about apprehensively, but seeing there were no people near them, continued: "You see, father spent his life in the hills, and all of the people there were very fond of him. They didn't have much money—they're pretty poor, in fact—but they tried to pay him something besides giving us a home and food. There is some gold in these hills, you know?" Again Brewster suppressed a start, but he glanced suspiciously at the girl walking trustingly beside him with her hand in his arm. "None of the mountain folk had much," she continued, not noting his suspicious look, "but years ago they decided they would give father a part of the gold they washed out of the gravel—you know there are still a few placer mines in the Georgia hills—and let him build a church with part and keep part, or keep all if he wanted to."

"So you have a gold brick to sell," Brewster asserted. The light was too faint for her to notice the cold, cynical look in his eyes, nor could her ears hear the unspoken words that flashed through his mind—"a new trick in an old con game."

"Yes," she answered ingenuously. "To keep themselves from knowing how much they were setting aside, the miners would work one day each month for this purpose, and give the gold to father right away. I remember when a little girl that he used to give me the larger nuggets to play with." She sighed, and despite his firm conclusion that her whole story was what he called a "frameup," with Uncle Jim as an accessory, Brewster's arm gave a reassuring pressure.

"And how did it become a brick?" he asked, anxious to have her finish her "come-along" story.

"Why, when father became so ill he decided that he might not recover, so he had one of the old miners whom he trusted without question melt the gold and mold it into a brick—and—and—it's been like a white elephant to Aunt Mary and me."

The girl was almost sobbing. Brewster, thinking that she was acting her part with all the art of an accomplished gold-brick confidence worker, admired her for it. He had thoroughly routed from his thought any feeling of pity or sympathy he had held, and was determined to put her to the full test by appearing to be on the verge of "falling" for her story.

"But why don't you take it to the mint, or a bank?" he asked.

"I tried it once, in Baltimore, Mr. Brewster," she said sadly. "I was afraid to try it in Savannah after that. I am afraid to keep it. Uncle Jim knows I have it, and is determined to get it away from me. He says my father owed him more than the value of the brick, and that it really belongs to him. The mortgage is due on Aunt Mary's house—and that's our only home—and the man who holds it says we cannot have a bit of time."

"You're in hard luck, girlie, you certainly are," Brewster said feelingly. "What happened in Baltimore where you tried to sell the brick?"

"Why, I took it to a bank and told the cashier about it and asked him to buy it."

"You told him what you've just told me?" Brewster asked, with a long, admiring look at the girl.

"Not quite as fully," the girl said. "He—he seemed more of a stranger." Brewster wondered if it was purely imagination which told him she snuggled a little closer to him as she spoke.

"I'm not surprised that he didn't buy it," he said.

"He laughed at me."

"Naturally."

"But it was the truth," the girl protested, "and he had no right to laugh."

"Of course it's the truth," Brewster assented. "But sometimes the truth seems funny to some people."

"It made me indignant, and I showed it and started to tell him that he had no right to doubt me and then—" the girl's voice broke—"then he threatened to have me arrested for trying to work a confidence game if I didn't get out at once." Brewster made no comment, and presently the girl added plaintively, "I just don't know what to do with the thing."

Still Brewster made no reply. The girl was silent also for some minutes.

'When I saw—oh, but you want to think!" she murmured.

They walked silently through the dusk down the tree-lined avenue, turned west on the cross street, and presently stopped in front of a modest cottage.

"This is our home, Mr. Brewster," the girl said. "I—I cannot thank you enough for what you have done for me this evening."

"It was nothing," he replied lightly. "What will you do tomorrow when Uncle Jim follows you?"

"I—I don't know."

"I had planned to leave in the morning."

"Oh!" Her monosyllabic exclamation expressed great regret.

"Certainly a clever little actress," Brewster thought. Aloud he said: "Won't you ask me in and let me see your white elephant?"

"Will you?" She seemed childishly delighted. "I'd be so glad to have you."

Without waiting for a reply she ran up the steps. Brewster followed, wondering what he would do to get away without letting the girl know he understood her crookedness. He was surprised to find himself wanting to continue to be counted her friend. He wanted her good opinion.

She continued to act the role of a hostess ingenuously delighted with her guest. She introduced him to Aunt Mary without giving Aunt Mary's last name, and the old woman smiled affably despite her toothless gums. When the girl said that Mr. Brewster wanted to see the brick the old woman's eyes sparkled.

"Is he going to buy it, Alice?" she asked quickly.

"The old girl doesn't play her part well," Brewster thought. "She's altogether too anxious."

"No-o," the girl replied. "He wants to see it. He is going to help us dispose of it."

Brewster surreptitiously pinched himself to keep from laughing aloud. There flashed through his mind the picture of the time Slippery John had sold him a gold brick ten years before, in Chicago, with no one to help him, and for an instant he wondered what Slippery John would have given for such a partner as this girl.

Alice left the room, returning presently with an oblong newspaper wrapped package in her arms, whose weight was evidenced by her difficulty in carrying it. Brewster sprang up and relieved her of the burden, placing it upon the table. He unwrapped it and looked earnestly at the dull gold-colored brick. He lifted it, examined it carefully, and asked the girl:

"How much does it weigh? What is it worth?"

"Father told me that it weighs almost forty pounds, and is worth——"

"A little more than twelve thousand dollars," Brewster interrupted.

"Twelve thousand five hundred and sixty dollars," the girl answered. "It weighs six hundred and twenty-eight ounces."

"It's a good piece of work," Brewster said critically. "It looks exactly like a solid piece of gold."

"Why shouldn't it?" Aunt Mary demanded.

Alice retired, and Aunt Mary and Brewster chatted until the girl returned to announce supper and to insist upon Brewster remaining. It required little argument to persuade him.

His admiration for the girl increased through the meal. She had lost her apprehensive dread, and presided at the table with a grace that charmed him and made him forget the trap which had been laid for him. When the meal was finished, Aunt Mary excused herself. Alice leaned her elbows on the table, put her chin in her hands, and looked at Brewster with wide, frank, clear eyes, so steadily and blandly that presently he averted his returning glance.

TO LEDGER READERS

Be sure and read,

"The Gold-Brick Girl and The Gold-Brick Man"

in this issue, also don't fail to read the new boys' story in this number,

"Prisoners of Tecumseh; or, The Boys of Old Fort Meigs."

These are whaling good stories. Next week's leading story will be,

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You will find it a peculiarly fascinating story of mystery and adventure. Next week's

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It is a good story and will close the series. It will be followed by a powerful series of

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"Mr. Brewster," she said pleadingly, "please tell me what to do with this brick? You know my story. If you cannot help me, I don't know what I shall do."

"I am your last chance?" he asked banteringly.

"Apparently you are my only chance, first and last," she replied frankly.

"You must have four thousand dollars immediately?"

"Or Aunt Mary and I will be thrown into the street, and I cannot earn enough to support us." Her innocent, frank, pleading look remained.

"I have just four thousand in cash, a little more," Brewster replied.

"Oh, no, I didn't mean for you to buy it," she said quickly.

"I couldn't," he responded. "It is worth three times that, you know."

The man chuckled inwardly. He was relishing the way she played her part, the control that caused her to give no sign of elation that would betray her, even though the victim seemed almost caught.

"I wanted to ask the man who owns the mortgage to accept the brick as additional security and give us more time," Alice said musingly. "But I was afraid of him." She stressed, ever so slightly, the pronoun, but in such a way that Brewster understood clearly her thought that she was not afraid of Brewster.

"I leave tomorrow, or I might help you at one of the banks here," he said.

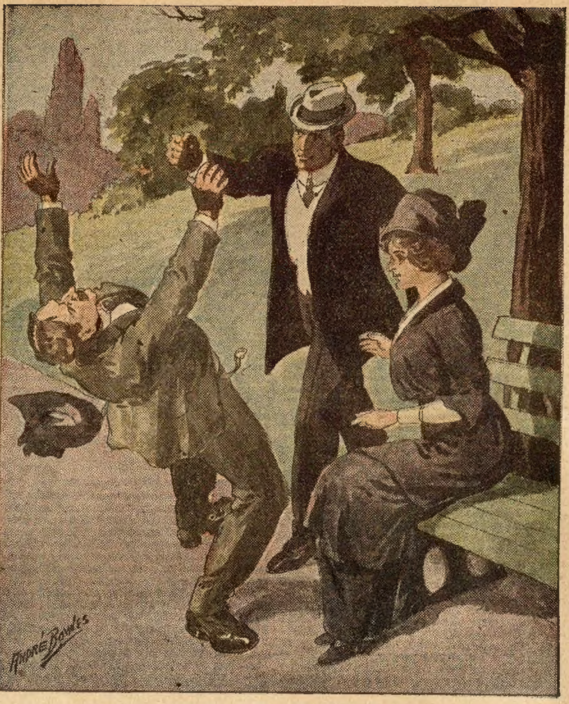
"I'm sorry you are going away." Her words were frankly regretful, her brown eyes even more so.

"But I might do one good deed to make my lazy and uneventful stay in Savannah memorable," Brewster countered lightly. "I might loan you the four thousand, take the brick as security"—he smiled—"and should I sell it, I could send to you the difference between the sale price and the four thousand."

"Would you do that for me, Mr. Brewster?" She clasped her hands.

"I will do it." He spoke with determination.

Fearing that his decision might be changed by a contemplation of the foolishness of his proposed action, Brewster briskly made all arrangements, including the drafting of a contract, which he signed and then passed to the girl. He watched her quietly as she signed "Alice Butler" and gravely handed the paper back to him. Equally as gravely he counted out the money, noting ruefully that there remained in his bill book only a little more than two hundred dollars, which represented all his cash resources. He gravely wrote her name and address and business address in his note-book, promising to notify her when he should dispose of the brick. Before departing with the brick, which had been rewrapped in newspaper, he looked intently into her brown eyes, saw nothing to betray her knowledge that he had been victimized, marveled at her self-control, and said softly:



"You'd better be going!"

"Aren't you afraid to trust me—a stranger—with all this valuable property?"

"No, I am not afraid. I trust you."

She spoke gently, almost tenderly, Brewster thought.

"But you do not know me," he persisted.

"You're the only friend I've found since my father died," she replied trustingly. Her hand touched his arm lightly; Brewster thought her eyes glistened with tears; he was startled out of his own calm humor when she suddenly caught his hand in both of hers, pressed it tightly, leaned over and kissed it. "I—I hope you will bring me the money, and not send it, when you sell the thing," she murmured with suppressed emotion. "Good-by. Please go!"

And J. Randolph Brewster, long possessed of a great pride at being the master of himself and circumstances under any conditions, found himself, scarcely aware of how it all had happened, out in the street with the newspaper-wrapped, gold-coated lead brick under one arm and his cane in his other hand. He looked at the closed door.

"Well, I'll be—whew! that certainly is one on your uncle! Bunkoed with my eyes open, and made to like it, and invited to make myself scarce in such a way that I want to hang around and be chased off again."

A long, hearty, deep-chested laugh broke the stillness of the night, and then Brewster turned eastward towards the park, railing at himself for being a modern Quixote and sentimental ass in one.

He came to a dark stretch just before reaching the better lighted Bull street, and near the corner two men sprang upon him from the shadows. Using his cane as a rapier he stuck its ferule into the face of one, dropped it, and swung quickly upon the other, his fist landing upon the man's chin, the blow sending him sprawling to the ground. At that moment one of the county police, mounted on a motorcycle, sped by, saw the struggle, stopped, and returned as quickly as possible.

The man Brewster had poked with the cane was howling in pain, but Brewster thought he recognized Uncle Jim. He laughed curtly at the thought that Alice was taking unusual precautions to make him believe her story. As the policeman approached, the other assailant jumped to his feet, called a warning to Uncle Jim, and ran west through the dark street. Uncle Jim wisely followed. Brewster was alone when the officer reached the corner, and laughed off the affair.

"A couple of foolish footpads who thought they would rob me," he explained.

"Did they get anything?"

"A couple of sore faces where my cane and fist struck them," Brewster replied. He picked up the cane and became conscious that he was gripping the brick under his left arm. He felt quite foolish.

The policeman walked with him to Bull street and north along that thoroughfare a short distance, and then left him alone. Brewster laughed many times on the walk back to the hotel, and was still smiling at himself when he reached his room and propped open the door with the gold brick. It was a warm night. The outside shutter door might prevent the entrance into his room of a person, but a long arm could easily reach under it and secure the brick.

Brewster thought of this, eyed the brick, kicked it contemptuously but gently, and tried to forget it.

This capital story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you if you send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

The Enchanted Chopstick

By James C. Threlfall

IT ALL happened, as Paddy Whalen will tell you, in County Clare, in the Very Old Times, when there was a King in County Clare, and in fact in many another County of Ireland, and when fairies with their fairy tokens were still in the land. Witches, alas! and witch-charms were also to be found.

The little Prince Diarmid of Clare was old enough to have a christening, so a christening his father, the King, gave him, and sent out invitations to all the great ones, and to many of the little ones of Ireland.

The castle was very thoroughly guarded against witches, but what did all their guardings amount to? One old crone disguised as a washwoman with a basket of clean linen on her back hobbled to the very cradle where the little Prince lay cooing and clapping, and her gift was laid right to his hand on the summit of a pile contributed by the well-wishers.

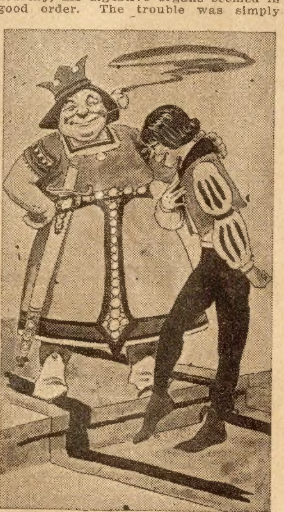
It was a simple and harmless-enough looking gift, being nothing more nor less than a sandalwood chopstick.

Knives and forks had not yet been invented, every one in those days ate with chopsticks. Since the little Prince seemed to take a liking to the cleverly carved token, he was allowed to clutch it between his chubby fingers, from the very start, and foozle with it to his heart's content.

On the witch's chopstick the little Diarmid cut his teeth during his spell of tooth-cutting, and after he graduated from his bottle it was with the same chopstick that he hogged his potatoes and his cornmeal mush.

When the Prince was five years old, people began to wonder. He was no better developed physically or mentally than he should have been at two. He could walk but little, and his talk was mostly gibberish which not even his nurse could understand.

His head had a good shape to it, he ate heartily, his digestive organs seemed in good order. The trouble was simply this: he wasn't growing. He was stationary, physically and mentally, stationary at an age when progress should have been made almost by leaps and bounds.



"I will reward myself amply"!

A consultation was called of all the doctors of the kingdom.

There were a hundred and twenty-five of them, all told, and they discussed the case very sagely, and invented some clever, new, high-sounding Latin phrases to describe the symptoms, and some other clever, new, high-sounding Latin phrases to describe the treatment to be followed, and then dispersed after suggesting a hundred and twenty-five methods of treating the trouble.

And there the matter would have remained to this day if it hadn't been for a young medical student who used to walk about the Royal gardens daily with the Prince's nurse.

He was only a beginner in the healing profession, hence his mind wasn't so confused by abstruse theories as it would have been later on, and he decided that the princeling made entirely too much ado over a certain sandalwood chopstick.

He carried it with him everywhere he went. If it was taken from him when he was awake, he cried and fretted until it was returned to him; if it was taken from him when asleep, he woke and set up a din until it was again in his hands.

The student told his suspicions to the King.

"If it is the chopstick which is giving the trouble," said His Highness, "we will get rid of it."

So the student went back to school.

The King was just about to send an embassy to one of the neighboring potentates at the time to tell him how very much he liked him. He had arranged to send a gift of a wooden chest full of precious stones with his embassy.

He had the chest brought to his room in private just before the embassy set out, and with a brace and bit which hung above the throne he bored a hole slantwise, in the bottom of the coffer, and tucked the Prince's chopstick into the hole as neat as you please.

Then when the nurses and maids of the castle were running hither and thither looking for the chopstick, and the little Prince was screaming the top of his head off, the King professed an entire ignorance of its whereabouts, and went off hunting on his favorite charger and considered the incident closed.

All very clever, but his kingship could not foresee that in crossing the stream dividing the two kingdoms the embassy's boat should be capsized, and that there would be nothing saved out of the boat but the men and the coffer. Neither could he foresee that in the melee the chopstick should be loosened from its hold and go swirling down the stream.

But that was exactly what happened, and as the chopstick swirled down the river, it looked so much alive that a silly old gudgeon of a fish swallowed it before he knew any better.

Next day the Royal Cook of County Clare was preparing a fine fish which the Royal Fisherman had just caught for the Royal Table. Out of its paunch popped a little wooden cylinder into the very hands of the little Diarmid who sat in a high chair watching the cook.

A half-hour later the King came to dinner. There sat the little Prince beating a tattoo with his chopstick as happy as you please.

Next day a fine scheme popped into the head of the King.

In his pleasure park was caged a large bald eagle. The King was an expert taxidermist, and was saving the bird against a time when he should mount him for his collection.

Of course, he thought more of the young Diarmid than of any hobby. That night he took the chopstick from the relaxed fingers of the sleeping youngster, and made his way to the eagle's cage, wired the thing neatly to the right leg of his birdship, and turned him loose. Then he went back to bed and slept very soundly.

He could not foresee that the eagle would be seen winging its way through the Royal Forests the next day by one

(Continued on page eighteen.)

Detective Keeneyes' Craft

Or, THE DELEMERE MYSTERY

By J. Breckenridge Ellis

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Begun in No. 30, July 25. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE barn they were now leaving was on the property of a man who no longer lived in Meadowville, and who, for the past three months, had been unsuccessful in renting it.

Howard Whittleby led the way through the frowsy barn lot and the back yard overgrown with weeds, and stopped at the back porch. He was closely followed by the black wood sawyer, Tooten.

They were not far from the street that ran in front of the gate, nor from the alley at the rear; and it seemed impossible that any one should be hiding in the house and escape the observation of the passers-by. However, the young lover of the vanished Alice Delemere was determined to leave no stone unturned in proving or disproving Tooten's absurd suspicions.

Accordingly, he stepped upon the back porch and tried the kitchen door. He gave a slight exclamation of surprise. The door was unfastened. He opened it.

Tooten exclaimed, drawing back in sudden alarm, "What did I tell you!"

"You told me that Edgar Delemere must have run in here when you saw him disappear from the loft door of the barn," retorted Howard, hesitating on the threshold. "But you said nothing about this door's being unlocked. Even granting that Edgar is alive, and that he has come back to his home town to hide, and that he hid in here, why didn't he fasten the door behind him?"

"I don't know, sah."

"No, I dare say you don't!" retorted Howard, ironically. However, he stepped rapidly into the kitchen, followed by Tooten. The room was bare of all furniture, and so were all the rooms downstairs. There was no sign of recent occupancy, anywhere.

"We'll go upstairs," said Howard, still sarcastically. "Since Edgar is fond of gazing out of barn lofts, perhaps he enjoys an attic view."

"I 'spect he's up dar, boss," Tooten maintained, following.

In the hallway above, they paused. The cottage was a small one, and upstairs there were only two rooms, whose doors were opposite each other, opening upon the narrow hall. Howard, with a smile at his own folly, knocked upon one of the doors, but there was no response.

"Of course," he said, with a shrug.

Then he tried the door. It opened readily, and he thrust his head into a barren chamber like those downstairs.

Tooten nodded his head toward the other door and said:

"Den he bound to be in dis here room, boss."

"That's so," Howard smiled; "at least, if he is anywhere except in your own dreaming head."

He turned and knocked upon this last door. As before, not a sound answered him. Then he turned the knob. The door was locked.

"You see dat?" cried Tooten, excitedly.

"See what?" growled Howard, considerably taken aback.

Tooten raised his voice, calling:

"Oh, Edgar! Edgar Delemere! You know who I is. Lemme in. Edgar, I knows you's in dar. It's des me and Mr. Howard Whittleby."

Perfect silence followed these entreaties.

"The room is empty like the others," Howard declared.

"No, sah, I tell you Edgar is in dar. What for is dis de only room in de house dat am locked up, if he ain't hiding in dar?"

Howard shouted, "Edgar! Edgar!"

No reply.

Howard paused irresolutely. He had been unconsciously affected by Tooten's absolute certainty. But if Edgar was in there—and hiding from his friends——

"Well," he spoke irritably, "we can't break down the doors in another man's house. There's no key, and I'd have to ruin the lock——"

"Mr. Whittleby, you ain't a-going away from here and leave everything like dis, is you?"

"But Tooten, if Edgar is alive—if he is in there—it's all absolutely ridiculous to suppose it—but if he is, as you think, in there, why should we break in upon him? Evidently he wants to avoid us."

"But good Lawd, Mr. Howard, if he dar, he must tell us what happen to he sister and mother and father. And he must tell how come him to escape and none of de rest ever heard of."

"I'll break open the door," Howard said shortly.

He made a rush and threw himself violently against the door. There was a crrash, and Howard stumbled into the room.

He caught himself just as he was about to fall, stood erect, and stared about him with dazed eyes, while the black man, who had cautiously drawn near, looked over his shoulder into the room.

CHAPTER IX.

THERE was nobody in the room. But it was evident that some one had been there only recently. The window was raised. On the bare floor beneath the window lay a hat where it had hastily fallen.

"Dat," cried Tooten, excitedly, "am Edgar Delemere's hat, he very own, I see him wearing it the day befo' de family was blowed up; and it de same hat he had on when he was looking from the door of de barn loft!"

While the wood sawyer was talking, Howard, now convinced that Edgar was indeed alive and in Meadowville, ran swiftly to the open window. He leaned far out, scanning the road in every direction, as well as the shrubbery and lawn beneath the window.

No one was in sight. But a crushed rosebush, just below, told where some one had leaped from the window. Doubtless, whoever this was had climbed part of the way down the water pipe and had dropped only about five feet. Whoever it was had had more than time enough to escape while Howard and Tooten were examining the rest of the house. It must have been Edgar Delemere!

Whatever had happened to Mr. and Mrs. Delemere and Alice, it seemed certain that Edgar had been taking care of himself—that he must have left the house before it was blown up; that he left it by the back stairs, if his watch in the ashes meant anything—that he left it by climbing out the front window, if the watchfob imbedded in the branch of the tree was to be believed.

And here he was, again in Meadowville, possibly able to tell exactly what had become of his parents and his sister. It was maddening to reflect that, had he been a little sooner, Howard might have solved the terrible mystery—above all, that he might have learned the fate of Alice Delemere, whom he sincerely loved.

Tooten, seeing the anguish on his countenance, kept silent. Howard gave another searching look, then drew in from the window with the purpose of following, if possible, the fugitive. As he did so, he snatched up the hat as if to preserve it as a valuable clew. The hat, on being lifted from the floor, disclosed the margin of a piece of newspaper—the blank edge of a page.

Observing that something had been scrawled in lead pencil on the slip, Howard grabbed it up eagerly. The slip of paper contained but one written word, a word that in one way told much, and in another told absolutely nothing.

The word was "Glenover." This was a word Howard had never heard his neighbors use either as the name of a person or of a place. But he was well acquainted with the handwriting of Edgar Delemere, and the written word told him that it had been written by Edgar.

Had he been disposed to doubt Edgar's presence in Meadowville, he would now have been convinced. Tooten had declared he had seen him; here was his hat; and here was a word written by his own hand. But what did this written word, "Glenover," indicate?

He thrust the piece of paper in his pocket, and still gripping the hat in an unconscious hand, he said rapidly:

"We must follow him and find him. I'll go north—I may meet some one who has seen him, I may find Edgar, himself. You take any other direction you think most likely. And spread the news as you go. Get other searchers out at work. There is something in this we don't understand, but Edgar Delemere shall be found!"

With that he dashed from the room, and almost fell down the stairs. He rushed around to the telltale rosebush, and tried to discover in what direction the footprints pointed.

About the flowerbeds the earth was soft, and there was little difficulty in following the footsteps to the yard gate. Out on the sidewalk, there was but a single footprint to be seen, made by some of the mold from the soft earth near the house. This print pointed toward the west.

Howard looked diligently for other traces of the fugitive and found none.

Although he had told Tooten he would run north, the footprint decided him to go in a westerly direction, and accordingly he set out at the top of his speed, not slackening his pace until he came to the first street crossing.

Here he was, of course, all at sea, and could only blindly keep on his course, in the hope that he was in the right way. He soon met pedestrians of whom he made inquiries that amazed them. No, indeed, nobody had seen Edgar Delemere; but the fact that Howard should ask such a question caused immense excitement.

In a few words Howard told what he knew, then doubling back—for if Edgar had kept on toward the west, he must have met these citizens—Howard returned to the first street-crossing, and hesitated, wondering if he should go to the right or to the left. In the meantime, others were joining in the search; and from the rapidity with which the news spread, it seemed certain that whichever way Edgar had taken, he could not possibly escape discovery.

CHAPTER X.

THE search for the fugitive took place under one serious disadvantage. It was fast growing dark, and the clouds threatened a rain. The rain soon began to descend in torrents. In the meantime, the inhabitants of Meadowville ran hither and thither without any well-defined destination, since it was all a matter of chance in what places to look.

Moreover, it was not generally accepted that Edgar Delemere had returned from the dead. The fact was too wild, too unaccountable to be grasped. If Howard Whittleby and Tooten could have been interviewed together, a stronger impression would have been made. But these two were looking in different parts of the town for clews.

The next morning, events had developed nothing in the way of clearing up the mystery.

If the fugitive was Edgar Delemere, he seemed as hopelessly vanished as had the house when it was blown up with dynamite. Only one item remained, tangible, yet baffling. This was the slip of newspaper on which Howard had found written, in Edgar's handwriting, the one word, "Glenover."

Who or what was "Glenover?" That is what men and women asked one another whenever they met: "Did you ever know a person named Glenover?" "Is there a town in Missouri called Glenover?" Nobody knew anything about it.

A week passed; there were no new developments.

Then came the next sensational chapter in the Delemere case. It was a Friday morning, about ten o'clock on a bright, warm day, just such a day on which it would seem that nothing mysterious could take place, the sky was so open and brilliant. Yet it was on this morning at ten o'clock that one of the oldest citizens of Meadowville came upon a mystery.

Hiram Granger, the old gentleman in question, happened to be driving toward Meadowville on his way home from a visit to his granddaughter, who lived on a farm five miles from town. He was an exceedingly early riser, and had left Meadowville for the farm at break of day, and was now coming back with some vegetables in the back of his buggy for his wife to cook for dinner. Just at ten o'clock, he was urging the slow old mare across the wooded ravine back of Meadowville where the public road took a dive and for a time was almost lost among forest trees.

Mr. Granger, with his far-spectacles perched firmly upon his nose, was watching closely in order to avoid riding upon a stump, for the stumps of the cleared road had never been uprooted, and the mare, which would never stay in the middle of the road, threatened occasionally to draw a wheel upon a precarious elevation.

Suddenly the mare shied, which caused the old gentleman to look up from his absorbed study of the road. He saw something move away swiftly among the trees. His first thought was that it was either a tramp, or a village schoolboy playing "hooky" and fearful of being discovered. But while he was quieting his mare, and staring with that fixity that makes far-spectacles most serviceable to old eyes, the object again flashed into view, now farther away, and he saw that it was a woman's dress.

The old gentleman was scandalized. Holding to the good old notions of the past, and with no patience for new religions or new women, he was almost angry to know that any woman should be abroad in the woods, trying to hide from the public eye. It had certainly not been so in his day.

"You stop there!" he shouted with exceeding sternness.

The skirts hesitated, as if really impelled to obey the command. Then she who wore them thought better of it and darted off. But in order to reach the real woods, of which the trees along the road were merely an overflow meeting, she was obliged to climb a rail fence; and to reach this fence she was compelled to come into plain view.

Perhaps her hesitation, after all, had not been caused by his order, but from shrinking to come into view. At any rate, she evidently decided it necessary to risk exposure, for she rushed toward the fence.

She was far away, but the trees had given way to a clearing, and the old gentleman's spectacles were very fine; more than that, he had always been proud of his eyesight. The distance did not baffle him. He saw her quite clearly. His mouth fell open, and his astonishment was so great that he jerked the mare to a standstill.

The woman—he had not the slightest doubt of it—was Mrs. Delemere!

Howard Whittleby had sworn he had come upon unmistakeable evidences of Edgar Delemere's presence in a deserted Meadowville house. Tooten, the black wood sawyer, swore that he had seen him. And now here was Mrs. Delemere climbing a rail fence—yes, she had already climbed over it—she was gone.

Suddenly old Hiram Granger grabbed his whip and lashed at his astonished animal. What a piece of news he had to tell! He could hardly wait to reach town before telling it—he felt like shouting it to the very trees. Nor was his eagerness to tell any keener than that of the citizens to hear.

Every word was drunk in with exceedingly thirsty ears. At first there were not many words to drink in, for the event had been very simple; but Mr. Granger found more words every time he told the story, and the more he embellished his tale, the more he was encouraged to add a few more details. He was a truthful man, however, and told only what he thought he had seen; however, the more he thought about it, the more he thought he had seen.

"Come," cried Howard, when the news reached him, "we must search the woods and get to the bottom of this mystery."

"To the woods! To the woods! was the general cry.

The Delemere mystery threatened to stop all the work in Meadowville.

CHAPTER XI.

WHEN most of the male inhabitants of Meadowville hurried to the woods to seek some clew to the woman who had disappeared among the trees—the woman declared by old Hiram Granger to be Mrs. Delemere—they formed a picturesque and animated grouping—but a grouping with no very decided plan to work upon. The idea that the vanished woman could really be Mrs. Delemere was not so hard to accept as it might have been a week ago.

Edgar Delemere had been seen—then had hopelessly vanished. If Edgar, why not Edgar's mother?

Therefore the search was undertaken with some hope of finding something, however vague the notion as to what that something might be.

Of all those who hurried to the scene of searching, none was quite so eager as Howard Whittleby, who had hoped to make Mrs. Delemere his mother-in-law; and who now, no doubt, thought that if he could find her, he might learn something about his beloved Alice Delemere. Close to Howard's side kept the negro Tooten, who had searched with him for traces of Edgar Delemere.

The woods were very extensive, and it was impossible to form a girdle about it; therefore it could not be known but Mrs. Delemere had left it long ago. However, had she done so, she must have taken one of the public country roads much traveled at that time of the year.

When Howard had convinced himself that she was no longer in the woods, he tried to imagine a likely hiding-place that she had chosen on climbing one of the fences that inclosed the woods. On this point he consulted Tooten.

"Tooten, do you know any good hiding-place, not in the woods, but close to it?"

"Why, yes, sah, I believe I does," said the wood sawyer, thoughtfully.

"Then why not look there as well as here in the woods? It might be just as hopeful a chance. What sort of place have you in mind?"

"At the north corner of the woods, sah, across de big road, dar's an old shack dat's been dar ever since I was a baby, and before dat, I reckon. Nobody has lived in it for twenty years——"

"Oh, yes, I know the place you mean; the old hull of a shed called Martin's corncrib?"

"Yes, sah, I think after it got too onery to live in, a man named Martin used it for a corncrib, but for years and years it hasn't been used for nothing at all. It leaks like a riddle, one side is gone, de floor is out—dat what made me think of it when you said a good hiding-place. It might be a good hiding-place just because nobody would naturally think of going there to look for nothing or nobody."

"Then let us go," said Howard, "and explore—for we're evidently wasting time in these woods."

They made their way through the woods, passing various searching parties, and having come out of the woods at its northernmost corner, crossed the broad, main-traveled road, and entered a frowsy, unkempt bit of land—a farm of only a few acres, wedged in between two extensive, well-worked farms.

Before this wasteland the fence had long ago fallen down, and it now lay buried in the weeds. Weeds grew everywhere, but particularly in the front yard they were as high as a man's head and rankly luxuriant. These weeds, and some cedar trees almost hid the shed known as Martin's corncrib; only the rotten, half-dismembered roof was to be seen, gaping and black, from the big road.

Howard and Tooten made their way cautiously through the weeds to the miserable building. There were gaping holes where the windows had been; the door lay prostrate across the doorsill. The building had originally consisted of two rooms, but the front room was now almost as exposed as the yard. The inner room, however, while practically roofless, still preserved its form; the walls, though warped and broken, held their original position.

The door that had once formed the means of communication between the rooms was gone, and the space was boarded up. Howard closely examined the partition wall, but saw no means of entrance, save by climbing one of the four sides, and the insecurity of the walls caused him to hesitate in this attempt. Besides, why enter that penlike inclosure? He could see through the cracks that it contained no living being.

Tooten was also staring through an aperture between the boards that had taken the place of the door.

"What dat?" Tooten suddenly asked, pointing with his dusky finger toward a distant corner.

Howard gave a start, not because he saw anything unexpected, but on account of the other's tone. He stared thither, and at first saw nothing but the shadow; for over that corner, the roof was still intact. Then gradually he made out the form of an object which he had at first mistaken for a sagging portion of the floor.

It was shapeless. "I don't know," he said; "I can't make it out. A box, isn't it?"

"No, sah, it ain't no box."

"What then?"

"I don't know, sah, but I sees it ain't no box," Tooten maintained.

"A pile of rotten boards, then—it's lumber of some sort."

"I don't think it's lumber, sah. Seems to me—seems to me it's a kind of tarpaulin, or covering of some sort, sah."

Howard grasped the wall and put his foot through a crack. "Do you think this will hold me up?" he asked doubtfully.

"I don't know, sah, but if you falls and pulls her over, I'll go in dar and see what it am, for I think it's something mighty curious. I dunno why I think so, but so I thinks."

Without wasting any more words, Howard began climbing the partition wall, always careful to keep an outlook behind him, in order to jump clear of debris if the structure tottered under his weight.

Suddenly Tooten exclaimed violently, "Good Lawd, she's alive!"

Howard dropped back to earth, thrilled, but not losing a moment from casting exploring glances through the crevice.

What they had seen in the distant corner was a square black rubber cloth, hardly to be distinguished from the fire-blackened and half-demolished floor. This covering had suddenly been thrown up, and a man of ferocious aspect sprang to his feet, his eyes glaring with the light of insanity. His clothes were in a wretched condition, his face and hands —in short, his general condition was disreputable.

And yet Howard recognized in this savage creature one of the most peaceable and conventional citizens of Meadowville.

"Mr. Deadening!" Tooten gasped, hardly able to believe his eyes.

The man gave a wild, inarticulate cry, scaled the opposite wall with the agility of a wild animal, and dashed across the road into the forest.

Howard said in an awed voice: "Poor Abe Deadening! He has lost his mind."

"Yes, sah, dat was a crazy man if ever I saw one. But nobody ain't knowed nothing about it, is they?"

"He left town a good while ago, I think," Howard mused. "At least, I haven't seen him for a long time—not since the disappearance of the Delemeres. The day before that——" He broke off, his face suddenly changing. "Come—we must overtake him."

But Tooten held back.

"No, sah, I ain't gwine come to no close tackle with a crazy man!"

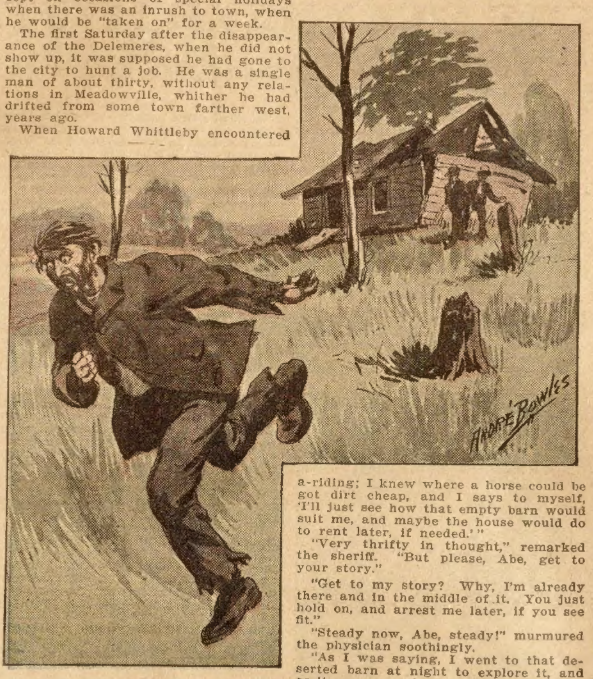
Without replying, Howard hurried in the direction taken by Deadening.

CHAPTER XII.

ABE DEADENING was a barber of Meadowville, but his absence from the village had not been particularly noticed because, having no shop of his own, it happened that, at the time of the dynamite explosion, he was out of employment.

Sometimes one shop in Meadowville, then the other, engaged his services for a few days—usually for Saturdays, except on occasions of special holidays when there was an inrush to town, when he would be "taken on" for a week.

The first Saturday after the disappearance of the Delemeres, when he did not show up, it was supposed he had gone to the city to hunt a job. He was a single man of about thirty, without any relations in Meadowville, whither he had drifted from some town farther west, years ago.



The man gave a wild cry and dashed across.

When Howard Whittleby encountered some of the men searching the woods, and told how he had found Abe Deadening hiding in the old disused corncrib, and how he was now evidently insane, all haste was made to capture him. It was not until sundown that a body of men came upon him crouching in a deep ravine, and overcame him in spite of his abnormally developed strength. His strength seemed due alone to his deranged mind, for he was pitifully emaciated, showing many days of hard privation.

Dr. Smerll, who had made a specialty of mental diseases when a physician at the State Prison at Jefferson City, before his coming to Meadowville to settle down, took Abe Deadening in hand. The doctor stated almost at once, that he believed he could, in a short time, restore the barber's mind to its normal condition—that some great excitement, and consequent terror, as well as exposure to all kinds of hardships, had reduced him to his present condition.

A week had not passed when Dr. Smerll announced that Abe Deadening was not only in a condition to converse rationally, but that he had a story of unusual interest to tell—that this story was one bearing directly upon the Delemere mystery.

Up to this time, no one had imagined that the barber could in any way be associated with the disappearance of the Delemeres, or that he could have any knowledge of the catastrophe; for though it had been noted that he had left town just about the time of the startling event, this seemed to have nothing to do with Meadowville's fearful mystery.

However, it soon developed that not only was the barber in a certain sense connected with the case, but that the case had been the cause of his loss of reason—a temporary derangement, which the skill of the physician had now terminated.

The barber had at first shown himself fiercely determined to explain nothing about himself, but the physician's patience had overcome him, and when at last persuaded that no harm would follow his full confession, he made a clean breast of everything.

At the express demand of Dr. Smerll, the sheriff—Hodge Puckett—and several interested citizens—among them, of course, Howard Whittleby—were present to hear the curious explanation. Abe Deadening, who knew them all and had more than once cut their hair, was nevertheless exceedingly nervous as he told his story.

"On the night before the blowing up of Delemere's house," he said, "I was in the deserted barn across the alley from the side of the Delemere place. I will tell you why I went there. That barn and the house it belonged to didn't have any tenants. Well, I was thinking of renting that barn. You will say I haven't got a horse. Hold on. I aimed to get one. And why? Well, sir, I made up my mind I'd lived single long enough. I'll soon be thirty-one. I said to myself, 'It's time to look around for a woman.' Well, you know there's nothing fetches a woman as sure as a horse. So I aimed to buy my horse, and take the girls a-riding; I knew where a horse could be got dirt cheap, and I says to myself, 'I'll just see how that empty barn would suit me, and maybe the house would do to rent later, if needed.'"

"Very thrifty in thought," remarked the sheriff. "But please, Abe, get to your story."

"Get to my story? Why, I'm already there and in the middle of it. You just hold on, and arrest me later, if you see fit."

"Steady now, Abe, steady!" murmured the physician soothingly.

"As I was saying, I went to that deserted barn at night to explore it, and as it was an awful dark night, I had my lantern with me. Well, everything looked ready for a horse down below, so I goes upstairs to take a peek at the barn loft. And now I'm upstairs in the old barn."

"Go on," cried Howard, intensely interested, as he remembered how he had stood in tnat loft not many days after the time spoken of by the barber.

"I'm going on, but I mustn't be drove," the barber stipulated rather sullenly. "I must tell this in my own way. Well, sir, as I said, the night was awful dark. I goes to the outside door of the loft, a solid wooden door, you will remember—and I was about to push it open to get air, when I heard curious noises in the alley between me and Delemere's place. You may ask me why I call them curious noises. I don't know as I can tell. They seemed that way to me, but I couldn't make out what caused them—they was, to my mind, curious noises.

"Well, classing them as curious noises, I said to myself that I would investigate; that it couldn't be any harm to find out what made them noises. So I sets my lantern down in a barrel and covers up the barrel to get shed of its light, and then I applies myself to a big crack in the wall.

"What did I see? Well, sir, at first—nothing. Because, as I said, it was that dark. But after awhile my eyes stretched themselves to their duty, and I could make out a horse—a horse being held by a short, lean fellow in some kind of a light coat. How do I claim to know the color of his coat? Well, I could see the blur of it, which if it had been black would not have been the case, and was not the case when the other two men showed up; for there were three men altogether, and only one coat made a blur."

"Do you mean to tell us," the sheriff interrupted, "that three men were hiding in that alley—that their noises indicated they were tnere on some secret errand?"

"Exactly so."

"That's a good many people to be in an alley expecting not to be seen or heard," remarked Howard Whittleby.

"There was more than three—there was four. You wait. The other was a woman. But let me go back. When you interrupted me, there was one fellow standing there holding the horse by the bit—a little sawed-off chap in a light coat. Maybe a pale gray, or a yellowish brown. But I had hardly sized him up when two men came out of the side yard into the alley. One was a spry, youngish-seeming chap, but the other was simply enormous. He would do for a giant in any three-ring circus. He was immense. And he was carrying, as if no weight at all, a form—a human form—a woman."

Howard started to his feet with a cry.

"Yes, sir, a woman; but she never struggled, or moved, or made the least sound; she was either dead—now, of course I speak from the distance of the barn, and only as matters seemed to me through the crack—she was either dead, or fainted, or chloroformed, or something along that line.

"Well, gents, the little screwed-up fellow I spoke of in the beginning—him holding the horse—he jumps on the horse's back, and the giant lifts up that motionless woman so that the sawed-off chap could hold her before him, and then I could see a little white blur across the young woman's face——"

"She was gagged!" Dr. Smerll exclaimed.

"Maybe so. I think, yes. It must have been the gagged-handkerchief that made the white line. Then for the first time a voice sounded loud enough for me to catch the words. It was the giant talking. He says, 'We'll be with you at Glenover.'"

"Who was he talking to," asked Sheriff Puckett.

"To the chap on the horse, of course. And the other fellow that stood in the alley—the young man—he says, 'You'll know what to do when we all meet together.'"

"Did the horseman answer?"

"Yes; he said he caught on, O. K. Then he rode away like the wind. And right at that time, the giant and the young man went different ways."

"This is a marvelous story!" exclaimed Howard. "Is it possible that the woman abducted was—" his face grew ghastly white—"was Miss Delemere?"

"Hold on, that ain't all!" the barber interposed. "While I kept staring out there, not knowing what to do, I saw a man sneak out from under the woodpile where all the time he had been hiding—well, sir, that man must have heard every blessed thing—and right there, within arm's reach of the whole crowd."

"Was it a negro?" demanded Howard, fiercely.

"I couldn't make out what he was. Anyhow, he skipped the country mighty quick. After that, as everything seemed peaceful, I pushed open the loft door to look better. But there wasn't anything more to be seen. And boys—the next morning the Delemere house was blown to atoms."

Suddenly, as if overcome by his story, Deadening buried his face in his hands, and shivered as with the ague.

"This, then, is all?" demanded Sheriff Puckett.

"Oh, no!" cried out the young man. "My part of it is yet to be told."

This story, developing very thrilling happenings, will be continued in the Ledger issue of next week. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year; it is worth many times that amount. Send in your subscription, for many great stories that you cannot afford to miss will appear during the coming months.

* * *

Three Wishes.

To the great god Buddha came the representatives of the Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish religions, to pay him homage. Buddha, very flattered, told each of them that if they would express a wish it would be fulfilled.

"What do you wish?" he asked the Catholic.

The answer was, "Glory."

"You shall have it," said Buddha, and turning to the Protestant, "What do you wish?"

"Money."

"You shall have it."

"And you?" This to the Jew.

"I do not want much," quoth he, "give me the Protestant's address."

* * *

The Attraction.

Advertising is such an art, says a publicity expert in the Washington Star, that many people actually buy periodicals as much for the advertisements as for the reading matter.

I sat in an editor's office the other day when a poet entered.

"Glad to see you've accepted that sonnet of mine," the poet said, feverishly pushing back his long hair. "I hope it will be widely read."

"It's sure to be," said the editor. "It's sure to be. I've placed it next to one of our most striking ads."

* * *

The City Child.

My small Suzanne, who has recently begun to study geography, came to dinner from her home work the other evening with a puzzled look.

"Daddy," she said, "I don't exactly understand about the Rocky Mountains—what they divide, I mean. Will you explain it to me, please?"

At the end of a rather detailed explanation she exclaimed joyfully: "Oh, now I understand. Thank you, daddy. You know I always supposed before that Fifth avenue divided the East from the West."

* * *

Higher.

John Thompson was a good husband, but he possessed a weakness for constantly teasing his wife about dress. One day he found her sitting by the window.

"Watching the styles, Emma?" he asked.

"Now, John, give me credit for having thoughts higher than dresses now and then," she answered.

"Then, you must be thinkin' of a new hat," he retorted.

Southland Stories

DAVID, JONATHAN AND BILL

By Hapsburg Liebe

THIS mornin' when I was down at the mill, I heerd Eb Fraker say somethin' that I don't agree with. He said that one o' them thar pided, zebry-striped mules was the contrariest thing the Creator ever created. Eb ought 'o knowed David and Jonathan Minder, what lived over on the Blackfern Mountain. Dave and Jon was a heap contrarier than any mule that ever lived. The fool streak didn't run in any of the other Minders; seemed like it jest centered in Dave and Jon, who was twins. But they got cured of it.

They was the only childurn their pap and mother had for twenty years; and then along come another'n, a boy—and a boy so fine-lookin' and so promisin' that he made up for all the years atween him and Dave and Jon. His pap and mother named him Bill, for his Grandpap Minder; and the way they went on over that thar boy did shore tickle everybody. It was Bill this, and Bill that; the sun rose and set in Bill—as well as the moon and stars; the world turned only for Bill's sake.

And as the years begun to add theirselves together on the boy's head, he growed still finer-lookin' and still smarter. His hair was as yaller as gold, and it curled up like the feelers of wild grapevines, and he wore them thar curls until he had to cut 'em off hisself, too! His eyes was as blue as the sky, and his skin was as soft as a girl's. And not only did the old folks dote on little Bill; Dave and Jon, great hulks of men and as brown from sunburn as Indians, worshiped him.

Well, when Dave and Jon each took to hisself a wife, of course, they left the old cabin on the Blackfern's crest. Jon went down the east slope a little ways, and built hisself a house amongst the Buckners, who he had married into; Dave went down the west slope to live amongst the Simpsons, his wife's people.

When Bill was about twenty-four, their pap he up and died, and soon after that their mother she follered him. So Bill found hisself alone in the cabin on top o' the Blackfern. Bill didn't like to be by hisself a bit; he was one o' these fellers what likes to have comp'ny around. And he was as open-faced and as bright when he had got to be a young man as he was when he was a boy. But he wasn't as big and strong as his two brothers.

When the old woman's funeral had been held by a preacher from acrost the State line, and fresh dirt had oncet more been banked up under the big beech that spread out over the little buryin' ground of the Minders, which was square on top o' the mountain, Bill started back to his lonesome home. He hadn't no more'n got thar afore his brother Jon, now forty-some-odd years old and a-turnin' gray in his hair and beard, come up to him and put one hand on his arm.

"Bill," says he, "you must come down and live with me from now on. You cain't stay here by yoreself."

Jest at that minute into the door of the cabin steps Dave.

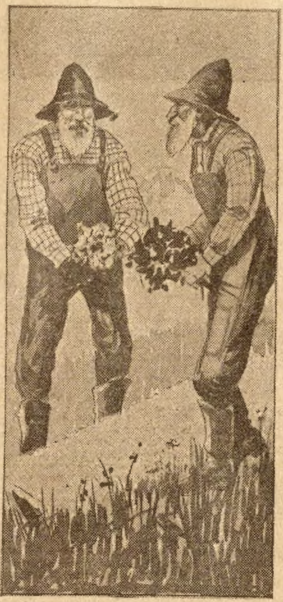
"No," says Dave, "Bill must come down and stay at my house."

"I be durned if he does, neither," says Jon, a-puffin' out like a peacock. "He's a-goin' to stay at my house!"

"I've done laid my plans," says Dave, appealin' to Bill hisself, "to build an extry room to my cabin, jest for you. You shorely won't disapp'int me, will you, Bill?"

"Dissapp'int nothin'!" Jon hollers. "I've done laid plans to do the same thing. You hain't no better to be dissapp'inted than me, Dave Minder!"

Bill seen then that things was a-gettin' clost to the fightin' place. He puts one hand on each of his big brothers' shoulders and gives 'em a shakin'.



"What durn fools!"

"Now jest listen at that!" he tells 'em. "Hain't you fellers ashamed o' that thar fussin' right afore pore old mother's got good and still in the ground? Be ashamed o' yoreselves, Jon and Dave! You needn't to bother to fight about me; I'm a-goin' to stay right here, what I am."

And when he said that, they knowed he'd done spoke.

Jon turns back to Dave. "It was yore fault, consarn you!" he says, a-stickin' his fist up under Dave's nose. "Hadn't 'a' been for you, I'd 'a' got Bill to come down to my house!"

"Don't you git too durned promiscous with your gab, Jon Minder!" says Dave, a-pushin' Bill, pore little feller, out o' the way. "If you do, you're li'ble to git a maulin' for it!"

Jon stands thar for about two minutes without movin' even his eyes, a-starin' at his twin brother like he could 'a' killed him and slept good over it.

"Don't you worry none about me a-speakin' to you any more," he says to Dave, when he could talk for his madness. "As long as I live I'll never speak to you ag'in, by gyar! And don't you never let me catch you on my side o' this here mountain—d'ye understand that, Dave Minder?"

Dave he was that contrary he wouldn't make no answer. He turns to Bill and says to him:

"Bill, you've heerd what that thar durn fool thar had to say to me. I'll never speak to him ag'in as long as I live and breathe the breath o' life; and, Bill, he'd better never show his weasel of a head on my side o' the Blackfern, neither, if he don't want holes shot in it. And if you cain't come down and live with me, Bill, why, you can shorely come down and see us now and then. We hain't got much of a place; but we can keep the rain off when it's a-rainin', and we can feed you when you're hongry. Good-by, Bill. Remember the latchstring at my house hangs on the outside. Good-by, Bill."

With that he makes a face at Jon and stalks off down the mountain with some of his wife's folks.

Jon told Bill good-by, and told him the same things Dave had told him about comin' down to see him, and then told him good-by ag'in.

So that's the way the twin brothers got at the outs. I reckon little Bill got more good things to eat, though, on account of it, than anybody in the State; Dave and his wife and Jon and his wife got to pullin' and hawin' to see which could git up the best grub to send up on the mountain to Bill, and each time they'd come they'd try to git Bill to say somethin' ag'in the t'other side. But Bill would never do that.

So the boy got to takin' life easy. All the things he wanted to eat was brung right to his door, most of it already cooked; and if he fell short any time, he jest took his rifle and went out into the woods and shot some game. To keep from gittin' lonesome, he traded around and got a banjo and a hound dog; and he'd set thar in the door for hours at a time a-pickin' that banjo, with that thar hound a-layin' aside of hm.

And then things got serious on the Blackfern. Dave's wife's people and Jon's wife's people took matters in their own hands, and got to watchin' for one another with guns. One of Jon's side got shot in the shoulder, and one of Dave's side got it in the arm, both the same day.

So Bill decided to leave, to see if it wouldn't quiet the fussin' some. He was mighty down in the mouth about it. Besides, he had a little bit of an idee about makin' some money in town, which was about eight miles off. He let 'em know that he'd decided to leave on account o' their fussin' about him. And the first thing they knowed, he'd shore left for town. He couldn't take his dog along; but he left some wet spots on the back of its neck.

It seemed mighty lonesome along the Blackfern after the boy had gone. The hound wouldn't stay at neither one o' the twin brothers' houses, but moped around a-lookin' for Bill, jest like good dogs will do. Jon was afeard o' goin' into the home cabin on account o' runnin' upon Dave thar, and Dave was the same way; so they let the old house alone.

The summer drifted on, and the leaves begun to turn brown on the chestnut trees—and the chestnuts theirselves was a-beginnin' to git ripe. Then the leaves begun to fall, and the chestnuts begun to drap off. The two brothers missed little Bill more'n ever then; it was the first time in years that they'd set out to gether chestnuts without him. And each of the sides stayed on their own side of the mountain; thar was no more shootin' at one another after the boy had gone.

Then a wagon from town come a-drivin' along the windin' road and stopped on the crest o' the mountain, and the driver axed for to be showed either to Dave or Jon Minder's. Dave got the word first, and he come a-runnin' up to the town wagon with a rifle in one hand and a gray squirrel in the t'other. And in the wagon he seen a long pine box.

Jon got the news at about the same time it reached his brother Dave. He come a-cuttin' the mustard up the mountain-side, with the big old tears a-blindin' him until he couldn't hardly see.

They set the box out on the ground, and the town wagon drove back. The Minders had axed the driver how it happened; but the driver didn't know anything about it.

The carried the box out along the top o' the mountain, and to the old buryin' ground under the spreadin' beech, whar they dug a grave. Dave and Jon hadn't spoke yit, though. But both of 'em was a-takin' it to heart pow'ful; both of 'em was a snubbin' into their half-gray beards like childurn what's been whupped. They hated theirselves for it. They didn't open the box, for they felt like they couldn't bear to see pore little Bill. The preacher, who happened to be a-visitin' in the community, come to preach the funeral. He was a' old man, and mighty plain in his talk. He'd been told how Bill come to leave his people. And he shore brought out some of his mind in that thar sermon thar on top o' the Blackfern Mountain!

When Jon had got to his house after it was all over, he set down in the door and put his head on his wife's knee and cried, pore old man! Dave he done the same thing. At each of their cabins thar was still a few old-fashioned flowers left, what the frost hadn't got. Both Dave and Jon took all o' the flowers they had or could git and put 'em on the grave up under the spreadin' beech. But they hadn't spoke yit.

The next day Dave and Jon each set in his house and carved out Bill's name on a slab o' slate-rock. And along in the shank o' the evenin' both of 'em took the stones to the graveyard to put 'em up. They met right at the fresh grave. And thar, with the mound atween 'em, each o' them thar gray-headed men put out his hand; and the t'other took it and shook it mighty hard.

Then they spoke at the same time, and each one of 'em said the very same thing:

"What durn fools we was!"

With that they set the stones up at the grave, one at the head and t'other at the foot, with the name turned in'ards.

And then who should step out o' the bushes right afore their eyes but the real, livin' Bill Minder, dressed in store-bought clothes and all shaved up as smooth as a button! He'd worked in town until he'd got money enough to start the venture he'd been a-thinkin' on for several years.

"I'd like for you fellers to tell me," he says, a-smilin' in his good old way, "jest when I died. And I'd also like for you fellers to tell me," he goes on, "jest what you done with that thar box o' fruit trees I sent out here yisterday!"

Dave and Jon stared, then they all laughed and shook hands.

The Southland Story in next week's Ledger will be called "The Lonesome Heart." It is a fine, strong story of mountain people, and will pay you for reading it.

* * *

Food of Love.

"If music be the food of love," muttered Mugsby, "that girl next door is going to put Cupid out of business. Cupid is going to have the worst case of indigestion that ever he had. She is going to kill him. That food she is feeding him is going to make him die, sure! Even a little of it would be bound to disagree and she is overfeeding him."

"All music is bad," responded Bryfogle, "that comes from a neighbor's girl who has a beau when your own girl hasn't any."

"It isn't that!" thundered Mugsby. "She doesn't play solely for the beau's edification. She plays when he is away, and she plays when he is on his way, and she plays when he fails to come at all."

"What kind of music does she play?"

"She plays every punk kind of music there is—classic and punk, and ragtime and punk. She plays music that is difficult and punk, and music that is simple and punk, music that is highfaluting and punk and music that is just plain punk, popular and punk, unpopular and punk, little fiddledeedee treble pieces that are punk and big booming, boom boom bass pieces that are punk.

"She can play a greater variety and maintain a stricter conformity to punkness than anybody else in the world. She has the most perfect assortment of bad music I ever heard. Her repertory is complete."

"It's a good thing that it is complete," insisted Bryfogle. "If there was a punk piece that you knew of and she neglected to play it, you wouldn't be able to get to sleep for waiting for it. So when she has played all the bad pieces you know of and you have checked them off duly, then you can go to sleep.

"Besides, if she has a lover she may get married and move away, and then you will not have to audit her music any more."

"You don't get the idea," insisted Mugsby. "It isn't just naturally bad tunes that she plays. She takes perfectly good tunes and makes poor ones out of them. She spoils some of the nicest tunes you ever heard.

"As to her getting married, I daren't put my hopes too high on that score, either, because I am sure that the lover will not survive the music. Every time I see him crawling away from the house visibly under the influence of music, I feel sure that an overdose will do for him some day."

* * *

No Easy Mark.

Martha is seven, and has shown more than the ordinary childish aversion to learning lessons, being washed, and having curls made smooth and shining, and less than the average delight in fairy-tales. One day upon her return from Sunday school she was questioned as to what she had learned from her nice teacher this time. She cried out with flashing eyes and an indignant toss of her pretty head.

"Why, mamma, my teacher told me today that story about the Children of Israel walking across the Red Sea and not getting theirselves wet one single bit—and she es-pected me to believe it!"

* * *

Politics at Home.

Little Millie's father and grandfather were Republicans; and, as election drew near, they spoke of their opponents with increasing warmth, never heeding Millie's attentive ears and wondering eyes. One night, however, as the little maid was preparing for bed, she whispered in a frightened voice: "Oh, mamma, I don't dare to go upstairs. I'm afraid there's a Democrat under the bed."

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"We sometimes tried other advertised breakfast foods but we invariably returned to Grape-Nuts as the most palatable, economical and nourishing of all.

"When I quit tea and coffee and began to use Postum and Grape-Nuts, I was almost a nervous wreck. I was so irritable I could not sleep nights, had no interest in life.

"After using Grape-Nuts a short time I began to improve and all these ailments have disappeared and now I am a well woman. My two children have been almost raised on Grape-Nuts, which they eat three times a day.

"They are pictures of health and have never had the least symptom of stomach trouble, even through the most severe siege of whooping cough they could retain Grape-Nuts when all else failed.

"Grape-Nuts food has saved doctor bills, and has been, therefore, a most economical food for us."

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Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.

Dorothy Dayne, Rebel

Or, AN ENEMY OF THE KING

By T. C. Harbaugh

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Begun in No. 27, July 4. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from newsstands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER XVII.

A BAFFLED WRETCH.

CARROLL LEE was troubled to the depths of his soul. The absence of Dorothy, who had fallen into the hands of the enemy, was now his great concern. But for the locked door beyond which the beautiful Rebel had forced him upon Morley's coming, he would have prevented this new and dangerous adventure. What had become of her? Had she been consigned to the mercies of Tiger Cunningham?

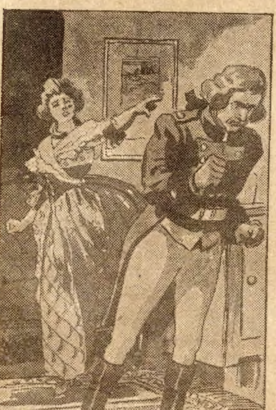
Grahame's whereabouts were also a mystery. This singular man came and went at will. Dorothy had confided to Lee all she knew about him, how her first recollections were of him; the first home she could remember was the house by the river; but she also said that she thought at times she had seen some other land which was not America.

Lee was more than once tempted to open the packet taken from Doctor Le Garde. He imagined that it held the mystery connected with Dorothy's life. It was only by supreme effort that he refrained from carrying out his desires.

Another startling event had transpired. The plot to capture Arnold had failed, as if the very gods protected the traitor. He had suddenly changed his quarters, for Clinton had ordered him away on a secret expedition, but really for the purpose of having him out of his sight.

In a whaleboat that rocked on the water at the foot of Arnold's garden sat four men. Champe was not far away, ambushed by the shrubbery, waiting for the traitor to take his nightly walk. There was never a man like John Champe.

But Arnold did not come. Champe heard the clocks of New York strike the midnight hour. Impatience almost devoured him. At last he strained it to the breaking point. He crept toward the old mansion and found it dark. Perhaps he could surprise Arnold in his bed. His noiseless tinkering with the lock enabled him to open a rear door, and he was inside, pistol in hand. What did he find? Emptiness and evidences of abandonment. The nest was empty and the eagle gone!



"Go, wretch!"

Cnampe stood amid the darkness and cursed bitterly. Tnere was no glory in his expedition from now on. He had lost on the threshold of victory.

"Now I can help Lee!" he exclaimed, at the end of his imprecations. "I don't care to recross the river without something to my credit," and he rejoined his boatmen in the worst humor a soldier ever knew.

The beautiful Rebel had fallen into the hands of the King's jailer. In the best apartment of Cunningham's bastile Dorothy stood, the prisoner of the man she despised.

She thought of many things in rapid succession. Where was Grahame, and what had become of Lee? Then she recalled her interview with Clinton. Once more she saw Vesta Telle lying senseless at the General's feet. Why? Why had this handsome Tory recoiled at sight of her? Why had she cried out that her (Dorothy's) eyes had come back from the Past to haunt her? It was a mystery too deep for the patriot girl.

She had seen no one since coming to Cunningham's house. The prison cells were beneath and around her. Now and then to her ears came the voices of the unfortunates who had felt the whip of the miscreant. Their wails and curses almost stilled her heart.

Suddenly a key turned in the lock, and Dorothy looked toward the door. It opened cautiously, and Dorothy recoiled, for La Belle Lanore stood before her. There was no mistaking the woman, who was clothed in a servant's garb. The sight both thrilled and mystified the girl.

"You?" she exclaimed, as La Belle came forward, a puzzling smile on her face which seemed to add a sparkle to her eyes.

"Why not, child?"

"But here of all places in the world! This is the tiger's lair."

"That is why I came?"

"Then we are both unfortunates."

The woman went to the door and looked out into the narrow corridor beyond.

"We may not be here long," she said, coming back to the silent Dorothy. "I am not Cunningham's captive, but his housemaid."

"So you serve the tiger?"

"For a purpose, child," and La Belle's voice dropped to the fringe of a whisper. "This beast holds in chains the dearest one in my varied life. I am here to help him."

A tear glistened in the speaker's brilliant orbs.

"It may not come tonight," the self-styled servant went on, "but it must come. I shall Rob Tiger Cunningham of his prisoner, or no more see the lights of New York."

La Belle paced the room under excitement which she suddenly controlled.

"How came you here?" she asked, whirling upon Dorothy. "Tell the whole story of your netting."

The girl did so, while the woman listened, now with flashing eyes, and again with cheeks of pallor.

"The thing that mystifies me," concluded Dorothy, "is the swooning of Madame Telle when she saw me with General Clinton."

"It mystifies you, I see."

"More than anything else in my life."

"All mysteries are some day solved," was the reply.

Dorothy started at the words.

"Do you know?" she cried, clutching at La Belle's sleeve. "Who is this woman who is feted by the enemy's generals and who drops senseless when she sees me?"

"There, dear, let us not think of it now," the woman answered. "We have other things to do. My time is up. I stole secretly to you. The beast is ever on the watch, but beneath my humbleness he did not penetrate, and he took into his employ one who owes him nothing but a dagger."

La Belle Lanore embraced Dorothy and then glided from the room.

The mystery came back. Dorothy thought till her brain swam, and she was not called back to her situation till once more the little door swung wide. The beast himself!

There was a grin on Cunningham's face when he stood off and for a moment surveyed his fair prisoner in his way.

"How is my pretty bird today?" he cried, moving forward. "How is the new nest?"

Drawing herself to her true height Dorothy deigned no reply.

"This is not the house by the river," Cunningham went on. "Nor is it the new retreat. It is the so-called palace of Captain Cunningham, the King's jailer, and one who knows how to carve his royal autograph on Rebel backs."

He could not have been more unfortunate in his words.

"It is the serpent that stings a helpless man," she said in measured yet biting tones that cut like a sword.

"And to your notion the serpent is your humble servant?"

She turned away too enraged to speak.

"My dear," she heard him say behind her, "I shall keep you in the best room in my abode. I will show you that Captain Cunningham can be a gentleman——"

"You?" and she turned with her hands bruising her palms. "When the stars fall that name may be applied to you; not before."

"Let me show you that even I can be lenient."

Dorothy was silent.

"If you will consent to become Mistress Cunningham you shall no longer be a bird in my gilded cage. There are other lands than rebellious America. I need not wear the King's uniform forever. By my life! for you I will turn Rebel——"

"And disgrace the cause for which brave men fight?" was the interruption. "Think you that General Washington for a moment would entertain such a proposition? There would be another bleeding back, to say nothing of a gallows well deserved."

The effect of her words was seen in the blanched cheeks of the man before her.

"You will not become my bride?" he stammered. "You will not preside over my future home?"

"You have heard my decision before now. It will never change. Between us there is a gulf which cannot be crossed. You forget that your presence is repulsive to me."

The girl went to the window, deliberately turning her back upon her jailer, and stood there with compressed lips.

Cunningham, with all his tigerish nature uppermost, clinched his big hands and glared fiercely at her. She did not know he had moved till she felt his hand on her shoulder.

"My only love——"

He never reached the end of his sentence, for a quivering finger was in his face.

"Go, wretch!" cried Dorothy. "Your presence contaminates the air. Lower than the hyena that rifles the graves of the dead is the man whose whip is his badge of office. Your wife?" She was laughing now, laughing in his bloated face. "Dare you imagine that I would stand at the altar with one of your kind?"

He seemed to cower before her.

"Depart, I say," she went on. "Yonder is the door. Betake yourself from this room. Go back to the darkness from which such wretches as you sometimes come!"

The ashen lips of Cunningham trembled with the words he could not utter. He moved toward the door. The girl's finger seemed a lance of doom. It moved not till the portal closed on the figure of the baffled scoundrel, and then Dorothy sprang forward and shot the bolt.

She was alone once more, hearing nothing but the tramp of heavy boots on the stair.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MYSTERY MAN RETURNS.

"GONE!" It was a wall torn from a human heart by its surroundings.

Grahame had come back to the new retreat only to find himself alone. There was a haggardness about his face which told of trial and bitterness. It seemed as if years had intervened since he left Dorothy there to embark upon another of his mysterious absences.

A small light revealed the empty apartment. Grahame moved it hither and thither, muttering the while, and at last replaced it on the table. He sank into a chair and covered his face with his hands.

No one came to comfort him in his distress. He seemed to have knowledge of Champe's failure, for now and then he cursed Arnold through his teeth and moaned his disappointment. Presently he sprang up and bolted from the house. There was a fiery frenzy in the man's eyes, and his form shook when the cold air touched it.

"Dorothy! Dorothy!" he cried as he hurried away. "What is this new mystery?" His voice trailed away among the streets.

"Where is Lee, and did he steal the packet from Le Garde? Must I myself plunder this human vulture? If so it shall be done."

Not long thereafter he turned into the street of Doctor Satan's house. There was a terrible cast on his countenance now. What if he should not find his man at home? Well, he could wait. He had waited for men before.

"No not yet!" he exclaimed. "Let the

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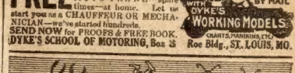

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serpent breathe a little longer ere his head is crushed."

He turned back and plunged into another thoroughfare, where the wind was just as cold. Twenty minutes later his figure might have been seen once more near the new home. It was not for him now. He stood and stared at the many lights in Madame Telle's mansion, stood like one in ambush, yet the lights fell upon and revealed his face.

A mad desire obsessed Grahame. Suddenly he darted forward, and in an instant was on the opposite side of the street. The shadow of the great house shielded him.

He heard strains of music, he caught signs of merrymakers beyond the damask curtains, and shut his hands hard. There was more demon than man in Grahame now.

A blind alley ran alongside the mansion, and the man, catching sight of it, darted thither and was gone. Presently he reappeared in the garden behind the house. He had pulled himself together.

A small, lightless room greeted him. He threw out his hands and found a wall. Moving along this he reached a door, which he pulled ajar. The sounds of festivity were plainer now. He could imagine what was going on a few feet away. No one came to disturb him. No one?

The door suddenly opened. Grahame drew back and waited. The hand of the incoming one bore a light, and a little cry was heard as that person confronted Grahame. It was a liveried youth whose eyes seemed to leap from his head.

Grahame was as quick as a cat. He stifled the cry when his hand fell upon the boy's shoulder.

"Not a word!" he said. "Your life hangs on a thread. Who are the Madame's guests?"

The youth trembled and stared at the strange man.

"Answer me!"

"Madame Telle gives a party to General Knyphausen," he stammered.

"To that beastly Dutchman?" cried Grahame.

"Yes."

"Where is Madame now?"

"In the parlor yonder."

"Go and tell her that some one awaits her in the kitchen."

The little prisoner hesitated.

"Give me your name——"

"I am nameless, smiled Grahame. "Tell her that one whom she knows is here, and you forfeit your life if you betray me."

The boy bounded away, and Grahame shaded the light with his figure.

The door swung wide and he heard the rustle of a dress. His immobility resembled a brazen statue.

"Who is here?" asked a feminine voice. "Who has summoned me from my guests?"

At that moment the strange man picked up the light and thrust it into her face. There was a cry and a recoil, and Vesta Telle stared at Grahame, blanched despite her rouge and quivering from head to foot.

"Don't!" exclaimed Dorothy's guardian, throwing himself between her and the door. "I am not going to bother you long, and then you may return to your Dutchman."

Vesta was recovering; he saw the old color leap back to her face and settle there.

"Give me the ring!" cried he, leaning forward with all the fury of a fiend in his mien. "It is on your finger now."

She looked down at her hand. Her gaze fell upon a circlet whose setting was a pigeon-blood ruby.

"I want it." His hand encircled her slender wrist. "You have no right to wear it now. I know it is your wedding ring, but that matters little. Off with it, I say!"

The white-faced woman began to toy with the bauble.

"You are merciless," she groaned.

"You are the last creature on God's footstool who should expect mercy. The ring, the ring, woman!"

It lay in Grahame's hand now. Triumph lit up his deep-set eyes.

"What has become of the girl?" he demanded.

"Where have you been that you do not know, you who know everything?"

"I have been to the depths of horror. I have just come back to life. But the girl?"

"She is the guest of Tiger Cunningham."

Grahame released Vesta's wrist with a cry.

"Who sent her there?"

"General Clinton."

"Now go back to your own," he answered. "I will be gone ere the devils in red can find me."

Vesta had reached the door when she suddenly turned and held out her hands.

"Ruthven——"

"Not that name!" was the flashed interruption. "I buried that name long ago. I am Prevost Grahame, the King's foe. And you——"

He came nearer, watched by her from staring eyes.

"Go back to your guests. General Knyphausen spreads his butter with his thumb. Can't you break him of that filthy habit?"

Grahame was laughing in his glee.

"I must talk," said Vesta. "I must call you Ruthven. I——"

"You shall not with me to listen."

Her gaze dropped to his feet.

"I'm going now," he continued. "The claws of the eagle shall not long hold their prey."

Vesta did not seem to hear him. Her hand grasped the doorknob, and she wrenched it open. The last look that flitted between the pair is one no pen can describe.

Madame Telle returned to the parlor and dropped upon a couch. Starting up suddenly she called a servant and then asked for writing materials. Her hand swept rapidly across the dainty sheet bearing her crest.

"Quick!" cried she, placing the message into the youth's hands. "Go to Captain Cunningham and place this in his hands. Give it to no other. It is life or death. Go!"

Her old self seemed to come back now. She was once more the beautiful Madame Telle.

Meantime the messenger had reached the street. He had not gone far when a hand closed on his arm.

"Just as I thought!" a man exclaimed, looking into the pallid face before him. "So the woman of the mansion sends you on a mission? The message, boy."

There was a chattering of teeth, a scared look, and stammered denial. The man shook the boy until his bones seemed in a heap.

Forth came the letter. It was seized by the stranger and thrust into his pocket.

"Come with me," said he. "You're not going back to your mistress just now."

Not long thereafter he flung the boy into a chair in the house he had but lately left. Then he went over to the candle which he had placed on the table.

His eager hands tore the letter open and he bent forward and read:

"My Dear Captain Cunningham: The foe is on the trail. See that your last prisoner is well watched. He is cunning, desperate, and a lion unleashed. He may come yet tonight. A thousand pounds fall into your hands if you baffle this man.
"MADAME V."

The man, who was Grahame, looked up with blazing eyes.

There were feet upon the staircase. Grahame crushed the letter in his pocket, and then throwing aside some clothing that hung on the wall, he seized a sword and turned toward the door. Instantly it flew open in his face.

"We have you at last, Rebel!" cried a loud voice. "Surrender in the King's name!"

"Not to his minions," was the answer. "You must catch tigers before you can hold them."

That was all. The biting blade went straight at its target. The pierced man fell with a shriek, and Grahame, leaping over his foe, disappeared in the twinkling of an eye.

CHAPTER XIX

THE DEEDS OF A NIGHT.

LOYALIST circles of old New York seethed with excitement.

It was not an attack by Washington nor the capture of the American army, but something that had thrills. Tiger Cunningham's lair was empty. Those who entered by the heavy front doors which stood wide were horrified by the sight that greeted their eyes. They recoiled with gasps when they had looked, and soon the entire city knew.

The King's jailer had reached the end of his tether. No more the whip for the unfortunate captives, no more the foul dungeons, and never again the oaths of this brutal man. There was rejoicing in secret. The patriots who crouched in the red shadow saw at last a gleam of light.

In the chair in his little office sat Tiger Cunningham white-faced and pulseless. A whip had fallen from his hands, and he looked not up when the crowd tramped into his presence. It was a new mystery.

There was a dagger wound in the brute's breast. A chair was overturned, and there were little gouts of crimson on the floor at the man's feet.

What had happened? General Clinton sent his trusty Morley to the scene, and Morley had told him all. Yes, the famous prison was empty save for the dead man in the chair, and Clinton's features flamed.

Let us turn back and see what had really transpired.

La Belle Lanore had opened the rear doors of the prison to two men, Champe and Lee.

"Where is Dorothy?" demanded the young lover, as he faced the mysterious woman.

"The girl is safe."

"And the Cerberus of this den?"

"He is in his office."

"Come, then. It is time."

"The hour for which I have longed and prayed," answered the woman.

"How many prisoners does the old trap hold?"

"Four and twenty."

"And you know where they are?"

"Think you I have been idle in this bloody nest?" La Belle replied.

"Here are the keys to the lower dungeons. See first that the poor wretches are released."

"But you?"

"Oh, I am going to watch the monster," with a grim smile.

Champe and Lee proceeded at once to their work. In a few minutes every captive was free. Among them was one who had not yet passed his seventeenth year.

He laid his hand on Lee's sleeve.

"My mother?" he cried.

"Oh, you'll see her soon."

"But she was here last night. She reminded me that the leaven of liberty was working."

The two men exchanged glances. The same thought came to their minds. La Belle was the boy's mother!

It was past the midnight hour. A stream of men emerged from the hated prison.

"You know where to go," Lee said to the boy, as he thrust him out into the night.

They found La Belle Lanore at the foot of the staircase.

"Are all free?" she asked.

"All," said Champe.

"And the boy?"

She was breathing hard with her hands clutched on her bosom.

"He has gone home."

"Thank Heaven!" It was the bursting of the floodgates of joy.

"Where is Tiger Cunningham?" and Lee laid his hand on the door leading into the miscreant's office, but La Belle held him back.

"The tiger crushes no longer," she said, looking into his eyes. "He resisted me and——"

A little gasp broke her sentence.

"Now let us go," she resumed. "They will know all before dawn. We will all have the red wolves at our heels. Clinton will smite like a Philistine when he hears. Why did not Grahame come with you?"

"We could not find him at the opportune moment. The mystery man has vanished again."

Dorothy was free. When she looked into Lee's face in the new home her eyes glowed with unspeakable happiness. She put her hand in his, and he bent over her and their lips met.

It is no wonder that New York seethed with excitement. There was no Tiger Cunningham any more. The whip which had dropped from a dead hand would never scar patriot backs again, and the redcoats who stared at the dead knew that retribution had at last overtaken the big jailer.

Sir Henry Clinton paced his room in varied moods. His color came and went. Morley watched him with secret satisfaction. The young aide loved Dorothy and was glad she had fled from the prison to which he had helped to send her.

"They shall all be hunted down," suddenly thundered Clinton, pausing in his pacings and fixing his eyes on his aide. "I will scour the city from river to river. I will show them that the King is as powerful in North America as he is on his throne. It is infamous!"

An hour later New York was deluged with proclamations offering great rewards for those who had opened the doors of doom and especially for the avenging hand that had ended the career of Tiger Cunningham.

Many squares from the scene of this startling event a woman was looking into the eyes of a wan-faced youth whom she now and then embraced in transports of joy.

"It is red, Oscar," said she, holding out her hand. "They may call me Jael henceforth. But you are free, and I, your mother, am the avenger."

There was another woman who heard the story of the night swoop, but not amid the humble surroundings of the reunited pair. She stood in the center of a scene of luxury. About her were evidences of wealth. The paintings on the walls, the soft Persian rugs on the floor, and the rich chandeliers that gave light to the room at night told of a plethoric purse.

She was alone. The look on her face

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was one of mingled exasperation and dismay. Madame Telle seemed to be on the verge of collapse.

"I must see him!" she exclaimed. "He must set all his scarlet hounds upon the trail. They shall not balk me now, when I am at the height of my power. I will seek him——"

She recoiled when, without the slightest pre-announcement, a man stood before her.

"You, Doctor?" Vesta cried. "You have heard all?"

"The city is full of it," answered Le Garde, his face betraying a secret pleasure.

"And you did not warn me?"

"Think you they came to me and laid bare their plans?"

Vesta swallowed hard.

"I am going to General Clinton now," said she. "I am going to set the red bloodhounds upon every one of them."

"But not till I have spoken."

She seemed to read the light in his eyes, and drew back as he advanced.

"I know what you would say. I cannot think of it," and she put out restraining hands. "He invaded this house. He came like one who is a God of vengeance. He robbed me!"

"But he left you your beauty," smirked Doctor Satan. "I know everything. The packet which I filched from him I secretly opened and read the story of three lives."

"My God!"

"Then I resealed it, and it was forced from me by one Carroll Lee of the Rebel army."

Vesta did not reply.

"Now, Madame, shall I denounce you to Clinton? Shall I tear from your face the mask you have worn? Will he not shrink away in horror when I bare your past?

"You will not do this?"

"Why not? There is but one way out of the meshes. Become my wife, and the secret is secure."

"Not while he lives."

"But you are divorced——"

"I cannot. I dare not."

The haughty woman seemed to tear the words from her heart and hurl them at his feet.

"Go!" she exclaimed. "Until then the gulf between us is impassable."

Sir Henry Clinton almost started from his chair when he saw Vesta Telle burst into his presence. She was a cyclone of passion.

"You know?" she said, pausing in front of the immobile Clinton. "The prison is empty and Captain Cunningham is dead."

"I know all, Madame."

How cold Clinton's voice was. It penetrated her like arrows of ice.

"You must take vengeance," she continued. "The doers of this tremendous evil must not breathe the air of freedom long. We must find another Cunningham."

"Thank Heaven he was the only one ever whelped!" answered Clinton, whose heart was not a stranger to mercy. "I am very busy now, Madame. By the way, what did you see in Mistress Dayne's eyes that caused you to swoon upon your previous visit?"

The last vestige of color fled from her face, and with clinched hands and welded lips she left the King's commander alone.

CHAPTER XX.

AT LAST.

PREVOST GRAHAME, the Man of Mystery, had not entirely vanished from the scene. He was back once more, and with the packet in his hands he confronted Dorothy.

"The time has come, child," he began, toying with the object he held. "The past shall now be revealed to you."

The girl trembled slightly. With eyes full of eagerness and fear she awaited the next move. Grahame opened the packet and placed its contents on the table.

"I prefer," he continued, "to tell the story, and then, if you care to read what is written there, it is at your service. I am not Prevost Grahame, but Ruthven Chester. Years ago, while abroad, I met a woman who became the bane of my life. My infatuation resulted in marriage. She had another lover who is now known as Doctor Le Garde. I was the victor in the tilt for a woman's heart, and we were married. Time went on. I reaped when too late the harvest of my folly. When a child came to add a ray of brightness to my life, I was at war with the creature I had chosen.

"Suddenly the child disappeared. I was then in another part of the world. The little one fell into the hands of the Brigands of Palermo. The ransom demanded by the child stealers would not have depleted my wife's purse. She refused to negotiate with them. One night a tiny packet came to her house and in it lay a pair of little ears."

A cry of horror parted Dorothy's lips.

"Even then the woman hardened her heart against her own offspring without a tear. In after years I came to America, my own home, for you had come into my life and I longed to bring you up with tender care."

"Which you have faithfully done," replied the listening girl.

"It was no more than my duty, child. Your mother——"

Grahame rose and crossed the room. For a minute he stood at the window quivering like an aspen leaf.

"Yes, your mother, Dorothy," he resumed, coming back to her. "A few hours ago she gave me back the wedding ring. Not freely, but with remonstrance. I robbed her of it."

"Then my mother——"

"Is in New York. You will find in those papers the whole story of the Italian past. This is the packet which Dr. Le Garde stole from Peter Prill's house. and the same one that Lee filched from him. I was keeping it for the future, for it was to have been your legacy. Now you shall see the woman who refused to ransom you from the mountain brigands. The ears in the box were not yours, but those of another child, sent to frighten your mother and secure the ransom money. When I return you will know the rest." Grahame was on his feet adjusting his cloak. "I will let you hear from your mother's lips the story of her ignominy."

He was gone.

The shadows of night deepened over city and river. There was sound of patrols in the street; a column in red led by Colonel Simcoe was marching past the house. Dorothy, fearing that Grahame would fall into their hands, sprang up and looked out. But he was already gone, and she came back to the chair.

Moments seemed hours to the beautiful Rebel. Once or twice she laid her hand on the papers, but as often pushed them aside. Her color came and went, her anxiety deepened.

Grahame had crossed the street to Vesta Telle's abode. There were no carriages in the street now. A dim light burned in one of the lower rooms, and the curtains were drawn.

The Man of Mystery went up the steps, but did not knock. The door opened at his bidding, and he stepped inside. A glimmer of light in the main hall guided him to the right room.

As he opened the second door, he spied a woman reclining in a velvet chair.

"I have come for the last time, Madame," announced Grahame. "Your child wants to see you."

There was no movement on the woman's part; no lifting of eye or hand.

"Madame, I am here," Grahame repeated in louder tones. "The retribution of the years demands that you look upon the face of your daughter, whom you left to the mercy of the bandits. You have not forgotten, for a woman never blots out her past. Madame——"

He had reached the side of the chair; his eyes had fallen on the ashen face which it sheltered.

"I am too late. She is dead!"

Grahame drew back, and for a few moments regarded the drawn features of Vesta Telle.

"Well!" cried he. "The shadow of this woman will not hover over Dorothy. 'Vengeance is mine,' saith the Lord. 'I will repay.' Man and woman reap what they sow," and with another look he went toward the door.

In the hall he came face to face with a man upon whom the scattering light descended.

"She is yours now, Louis Le Garde!" he said, pointing to the parlor. "A fitting bride, I must say, for a reptile like you."

Le Garde's face grew scarlet.

"Go to your bridal!" thundered Grahame, at his ear. "Take her as I left her!" and seizing the man's shoulders he forced him into the room and left him with the dead.

"I was too late," he said, when again he found Dorothy. "But perhaps it is better thus. Your mother, love, was Vesta Telle, and I am your father!"

Dorothy started to her feet and held out her hands. She seemed to read in Grahame's eyes the result of his brief absence.

"There have been times when I almost dreamed of this," she exclaimed, "but then a wave would come and hurl me back upon the shores of mystery. Vesta my mother?"

"Your mother, dear, but let us forget the past, and see in the future nothing but happiness."

She was in his strong arms now, her head pillowed on his breast, and she felt upon her cheek the tears of a real father's love.

They went over to the window, and for some time in tense silence looked out upon the night.

"Tomorrow we link our fortunes with the gallant men across the river," he said. "Sir Henry's proclamation will catch no one. You are still the Beautiful Rebel of New York, but at the same time Grahame's daughter."

The answer was a kiss which seemed to bring youth back to the Man of Mystery.

"Had we succeeded in the great plot," pursued Grahame, as we may still call him, "I would be the happiest man in North America. Champe failed in his venture, for Fate protects Arnold until the time when he shall die as all traitors die. Despised by the men who bought his soul, hated by the world, without a friend under God's sky, he will pass to his doom unwept and unsung."

The following day a boat put out secretly from the city and headed for the Jersey shore. Champe and Lee plied the oars, and Dorothy and her father looked back upon the spires of the King's prize.

In another part of Manhattan, La Belle Lanore held her rescued son in her arms and looked into his clear blue eyes.

"You will not be gone long, Oscar," she was saying. "Tomorrow I give you to Liberty, and you will stand beside Washington. The cause will not fail. There is a God in Heaven, and even as He brought the Israelites through the wilderness, so will He bring us through blood to our Canaan."

A truer prophecy was never uttered by human tongue.

The glorious day did come, and with it the full fruition of love, and Washington himself gave his benign blessing to Dorothy and Carroll, and the Beautiful Rebel of New York lifted her smiling face to the great patriot for a kiss.

What of Arnold? In after years an old man, dying in a London garret, took from a wardrobe a bullet-rent uniform of buff and blue and held it tenderly till Azrael came. It was the coat of Quebec and Saratoga, and with it for his shroud they found the traitor when they came.

The End.

* * *

HIS SISTER.

"Er," said young Pankwick, pausing in the door after he had left the breakfast table. He appeared confused.

"Did you say something, Algy?" inquired his sister with a start.

"Oh, no!" answered young Pankwick, with great carelessness. He cleared his throat and caressed the door paneling with one hand. "That is—say, the dance was great last night, wasn't it?"

"Why, yes!" agreed his sister, in some surprise, looking up from her letters. "Quite a pretty little affair. Rather stupid, though, because there weren't enough men!"

"Oh, weren't there?" echoed her brother, a trifle blankly. "I didn't notice—lots of pretty girls there, though, don't you think?"

His sister laid down her letters and stared at him. "What's the matter with you, Algy?" she inquired smoothly. "You'll rub a hole in that door if you don't look out!"

"Oh, I beg pardon!" her brother said nervously. "Say, wasn't that Miss Dally a peach?"

His sister wrinkled her brows in thought. "Dally? Dally?" she repeated vaguely.

Young Pankwick came back into the room and sat down, such was his disgust.

"You don't mean," he got out, "that you didn't see that girl? Why, she was a perfect stunner! Just the right height and size and complexion that would knock the spots off a rose; and her eyes! Say, honest, did you ever see anything like her eyelashes?"

"I gather," said his sister, "that you were somewhat impressed with the lady's looks, Algy! Do you mean the girl who came with Phil? She had on a blue gown."

"Pink," corrected Algy, promptly. "With fluffydoodles on it—you know. Why, a piece of that tulle scarf of hers got wound around my neck while I was dancing with some one else, and that's how I first saw her. Phil introduced us."

"Crude work, my dear Watson," murmured his sister. "Couldn't she have managed it any other way?"

"You're entirely mistaken," said young Pankwick hotly. "She isn't a bit like that! She is just as shy and retiring! Of course, I don't mean that I was especially interested in her—only I wondered if you saw her."

"I think I saw her," said his sister, pouring herself more coffee.

Young Pankwick watched her with an irritated frown. "I think women are cats mostly," he growled. "One of them wouldn't get enthusiastic over another girl if she died for it! Just plain downright jealous I call it! She——"

"My goodness, Algy!" interrupted his sister. "What do you want me to do? Go into hysterics and burst into rapturous tears over her beauty? Let her be beautiful for all of me! I've troubles enough of my own! You're silly!"

"Well, you might—that is, say something!" grumbled her brother. "You needn't be so self-satisfied and standoffish! I tell you, it isn't often you run across a girl like that Miss Dally, who is sweet as well as awfully pretty! Why, you don't know her. She——"

"Well, you couldn't precisely call yourself an old acquaintance," reminded his sister, sweetly.

Young Pankwick blushed. "I suppose if you're going to be disagreeable, you will," he said loftily, arising from his chair. "I was just mentioning that I had met her and then you have to go and talk as though——"

"As though what?"

"Oh, I haven't time to waste," young Pankwick growled. "I've got to catch that train."

"I thought you wanted to ask me something," suggested his sister.

Young Pankwick shook his head coldly. "No thank you," he said curtly. Then he paused. "If you were like other sisters," he muttered, "I'd—that is, I don't see why you couldn't go call on Miss Dally and ask her in next Sunday night with the crowd—but, of course——"

"Algy, my infant brother," said his sister in the tones of a dove, "I've known Miss Dally for some time, and after seeing you make a spectacle of yourself tagging around last night, it occurred to me you might like to know her better—so I asked her on the spot and she's coming Sunday with the others!"

"Oh-h-h!" gasped young Pankwick. "If you can't string a fellow! Say—I'd hate to be the unforunate man who marries you! You're a brick!"

* * *

Mean Thing.

Mr. Gotham—"I have tickets for the theater, dear."

Mrs. Gotham—"Oh, good! I'll run and get ready right away."

Mr. Gotham—"All right, dear; I guess you'll be ready in time, then. The tickets are for tomorrow."

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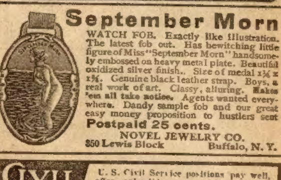
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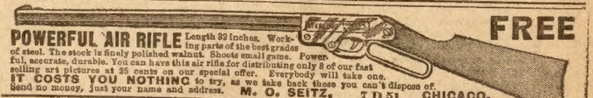
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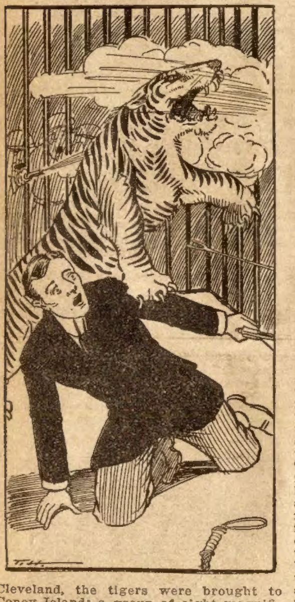
Side Show Sidelights

By Francis Metcalfe

The Tiger Tragedy.

CHAUNCEY DEPEW was at the bottom of all the trouble; not the once favorite son of New York, but his namesake, one of the handsomest double-striped royal Bengal tigers ever captured. Depew was the central figure in the group which Miller, the trainer of tigers, had worked so hard to educate, and it was his rebellion which made the teacher's labors of years come to naught. Late in the season, after months spent in giving the finishing touches to their education while they were with a small part of the show which was exhibited near Cleveland, the tigers were brought to Coney Island; a group of eight magnificent beasts, all jungle bred and each worthy of a place in any menagerie. Perhaps is was the discomfort of the journey in the small traveling cages, possibly the change in the surroundings and the nearness of the other animals excite them; but whatever the cause, there was trouble in the narrow runway at the back of the dens when they entered it to go to the exhibition cage for their first Coney Island appearance.



The sound of their snarling and growling, the reports of pistol shots and the cracking of training whips caused a sensation of uneasiness in the audience until the first tiger bounded through the door at the back of the cage, closely followed by a half-dozen others. Dangerous beasts they looked as they threw themselves against the stout bars, which rattled from the impact of their great bodies, and the front seats of the auditorium were quickly vacated by the audience. The noise in the runway continued, but the deep throaty growls which came from behind the dens were of a different quality from the snarling and yapping of the seven beasts in the exhibition cage, and when the last of the tigers appeared in the doorway the first arrivals made renewed efforts to escape through the bars.

It was Depew; not the good-natured-looking great cat whose "I-have-eaten-the-canary" expression and smug whiskers had suggested his name, but a jungle tiger who had "gone bad," as the animal trainers call it, and who stood for a moment in the doorway, wrathfully surveying his frantic companions and selecting a victim. Froth was dripping from his snarling lips, his small eyes were blazing like two points of flame, the hair on his neck and back stood up like bristles, and his great tail struck the door-casing resounding whacks, as he lashed it from side to side. Only a moment he stood there, and then the great striped body hurtled through the air as if shot from a catapult, and covering a good twenty feet in the spring it landed fair on Bombay, one of the largest tigers in the group. The aim was a true one, and the sound of breaking bone mingled with a scream of pain from his victim, as Bombay sank under the weight of the blow, his cervical vertebrae crushed between Depew's powerful jaws.

The door had been closed behind Depew when he made his spring, and the other tigers were chasing madly about the great cage, looking for a chance to escape. There was no desire to fight left in them, but when they collided with each other they snapped and struck with the instinct of self-preservation, their sharp claws and teeth cutting gashes in the sleek striped coats. It was evident that all training had been forgotten, that fear of anything so puny as man had departed from the minds of the tigers, and a groan went up from the audience when the door was opened and quickly closed behind Miller, the trainer, who stood, whip and training rod in hand, in the cage with the maddened animals. He went about his work as quietly as if it were only an ordinary performance, his object being to return his pupils to their dens before further damage was done, and to try to make them recognize that they were obeying him.

Depew was still crouched on the body of his victim, biting at the neck and growling ferociously, his tail lashing from side to side. Miller never took his eyes from him and kept between him and the door as he called the others by name and tried to regain control of them. One tiger after another was released, glad of the opportunity to escape, as the door to the runway was opened at Miller's signal, until only Depew, the body of Bombay, and the trainer occupied the cage.

The other tigers had entered into a general free fight in the runway, but the noise of their bickering was unheeded in the excitement of the contest in the exhibition cage. Depew rose as Miller cracked his whip and approached him, and made a rush which the trainer met with his pronged training rod, driving it hard between the widely opened jaws while his whip rained blows upon the tigers face. But he was only checked for a moment, and under his fiercer attack the trainer was forced to give ground. They were so close that the tiger could not spring, but he struck savagely with his great forepaws and tried again and again to pass the guard which Miller maintained with the training rod, using it as a fencer uses a foil. It was an unequal contest and the trainer realized that he was beaten; Depew would not be driven from the cage. The useless training whip was discarded and a savage rush from the tiger was met by a pistol shot in the face, blank cartridge, of course, but effective for a moment. Five more shots followed in quick succession and the trainer backed quickly toward the door, when his foot slipped, he was on his back, and Depew, quick to seize the advantage, stood over him.

Every keeper connected with the show stood about the cage with the Roman candles, fire extinguishers, pistols and irons which are always kept in readiness, and any or all of them would have willingly entered to rescue the man, but experience has taught them that two cannot work together in a cage with animals. They were quick to act and a stream of water under heavy pressure from the fire hose struck the tiger in the side, exploding fireworks scorched his skin, the din of revolver shots was in his ears, while the wads from the cartridges struck him, but he seemed conscious only of the prostrate form beneath him. At last his chance had come; the trainer who for long months had made him do foolish things which were beneath the dignity of a royal tiger was in his power; the revolver which had so often checked him was emptied; the cruel training rod was powerless, for the hand which held it was pinned to the floor by a huge paw. Catlike he paused to glory in his triumph, loath to give the coup de grace which would put his victim beyond the reach of suffering, and he stood there growling, the bloody slaver from his jaws dripping on the upturned face of the prostrate man.

Animal trainers need to think quickly and to seize the slightest moment of hesitation or indecision on the part of their pupils if they wish to be long-lived, and Miller, as he fell, had thrown his useless pistol out of the cage and uttered the one word "Load!" There was no time for that, but Tudor, seeing that the trainer had one arm free, threw his own pistol through the bars and it slid across the floor of the cage straight as a die to the outstretched hand. It was a time when fractions of a second count and Depew's hesitation robbed him of his revenge. The opened jaws were within a foot of the trainer's throat when the muzzle of the pistol went between them, and Depew, coughing and choking, drew back, his throat scorched by the burning powder, his eyes momentarily blinded by the stream from a fire extinguisher, while Miller struggled to his feet.

"People who see the crowds at my show think that I must coin money," said the proprietor, as he joined the press agent and the stranger after the performance. "But that accident in the arena tonight means a loss of $50,000 to me."

"Isn't that a high figure, even if they all die?" asked the stranger, who had been doing a little mental arithmetic.

"For those eight, yes, although a trained tiger is worth all sorts of money, but I have purchased twenty-eight in all for that group, and the others have been killed one by one, fighting among themselves. They average over a thousand apiece, for I bought only the best, and figure up the cost of their keep, transportation, and trainers' salaries for three years and you will find that I am not far out. That is the difficulty of the show business in America, the public demands so much. It is a marvelous thing, when you come to think of it, to see one educated tiger; but if he wore evening clothes and played the fiddle it wouldn't impress the Americans; they would demand a full orchestra. I can give an act an hour long in Paris with one high school horse, but here they want fifty liberty horses in a bunch and only care to watch them for ten minutes. I realized that from Bonavita's act with the lions; no individual lion did very much, but the fact that there were twenty-seven of them in the cage drew the crowds. That's what made me start in with the tigers, and I intended to get a big group, but now I am back where I started from. I don't believe a troupe of tigers can ever be trained."

"Hagenbeck has them," ventured the stranger. "They seem as tame as kittens with his show."

"That's just the point," answered the proprietor. "They are as tame as kittens—undersized brutes which have been raised in captivity and which go through their act like domestic cats. That isn't what the public wants. A sensation—the realization that every animal in the cage is a wild animal and that he is liable to remember it at any minute—is what holds attention. That is why I always use jungle animals when I can get them, for, although they can be as well trained, they always perform under protest and it makes it exciting. But the losses from fighting among themselves make it mighty expensive to keep up the big groups which the American public demands."

"That's one of the things which drove me out of the show business," said the press agent, as he set his empty glass on the table and signaled to the waiter. "A guy named Merritt and myself had a snake show in New York a few years ago which presented the most complete collection of reptiles ever gotten together, for it contained specimens of every species of wriggler known to herpetology and a good many that were not described in the books. That man Merritt was an inventive genius and had the California sharp, Burbank, beaten a mile when it came to inventing new species. When business was dull he'd take a lot of common, ordinary snakes into the back room, and with a bottle of peroxide of hydrogen and an assortment of aniline dyes he would bring out albinos and spotted and striped snakes which made the scientists open their eyes and kept 'em busy inventing new Latin names.

"His biggest success was 'The Great Two-Horned Rhinoceros Serpent,' which made 'em all sit up for a month, and if I hadn't seen Merritt working over a common boa constrictor with a pair of shark's teeth and a dish of bird lime it would have fooled me. That snake was proud of the horns which Merritt glued on his head, too, and he used to chase the other snakes around the cage and butt 'em like a giddy billy-goat. But in spite of all his ingenuity in originating new varieties, business was dropping off, for the public demanded quantity as well as quality, and we had skinned the local snake market clean. We were sitting in the office one day, figuring on where we could get additions to our collection,

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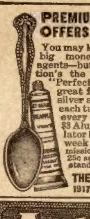

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when a stout, red-faced little man who had 'sea captain' written all over him came in and asked if we wanted any more snakes. 'Merritt allowed that we did if he had the snakes, and asked where we could inspect them.

" 'Well, I've got one that I brought from Borneo, and he's on a ship down in the harbor,' says the captain. 'We won't argue none about the price, for if you'll come down and take him away you can have him for nothing.' That made Merritt a little suspicious, and he asked the captain if it were his ship.

" 'I reckoned it was until two days ago, when that blame snake broke loose,' he answered irritably. 'Since then he seems to own it and not a man jack of the crew will go below. I've tried to shoot him, but the beggar's too quick, and I want to discharge my cargo, so if you ain't afraid to tackle him, come on.'

" 'Me afraid! Me?' says Merritt, throwing out a chest. "Why, man alive, I'm the only living snake charmer who ever dared handle the dangerous Two-Horned Rhinoceros Serpent, and do you think I'd weaken before a common Borneo python?'

" 'I dunno whether you will or not until I see you try,' says the captain. 'I've handled a Malay crew, which is worse than serpents, and I've mixed it up with most of the scum that sails the seven seas, but this blame snake's got me bluffed all right. He's three fathom long, as big around as the mainmast, and made up principally of muscle and wickedness.'

" 'Just watch me. Watch me!' says Merritt. 'I'll use my wonderful hypnotic power and you'll see the serpent crawl into the bag at my command, to be easily transported to this moral and elevating show for exhibition as an example of the power of mind over matter.'

" 'All right, professor,' says the captain. 'But if you'll take my advice you'll stow those shore-going togs and get into working rig before you tackle him.' Merritt was arrayed in all his finery, and if you'd ever seen him you'd know that that meant a lot, for when he was flush he could make Solomon in all his glory, or any other swell dresser look like a dirty deuce in a new deck. He had on a light suit with checks which were so loud they drowned the music of the orchestra, and a shirt which would make a summer sunset hide its head in disappointment; Patent leather shoes with yellow tops and a white plug hat with a black band around it completed his costume, except for a few specimens of yellow diamonds which adorned his shirt front and cuffs.

"Merritt snorted contemptuously at the suggestion, and we started for the ship. When we got on board he made a little speech before he went into the hold, telling the sailors about his wonderful hypnotic power and how he would exercise it to charm the serpent which was preventing their worthy captain from reaping the rewards of his arduous toil and his hardihood in having braved the perils of the vasty deep. The sailors listened and grinned, but the captain was getting impatient, and suggested that Merritt get the snake first and give his spiel afterward, so Merritt went down the ladder with the bag over his shoulder and we all rubbered down the hatchway to watch the capture.

"I knew what he would try to do, for I had seen him work it before. The way to get one of those big snakes is to cover his head with a bag, and then he'll crawl in himself to get into the dark, which is a serpent's idea of safety. The more you prod 'em the faster they'll crawl, and that was the time when Merritt always made passes with his hands and muttered gibberish to impress the spectators. He started in according to program as soon as he located the snake, which was half hidden among a lot of casks. The snake carried out his part and struck at the open bag which Merritt held out to him, but instead of sticking his head in he grabbed it with his teeth, and as Merritt held on he drew him back among the barrels and there was a pretty fight. Merritt was quick enough to get a strangle hold around the snake's neck and then it kept him busy keeping out of its coils. The captain hadn't lied much about the size of the python—it was about thirty feet long—and Merritt didn't have time to use any incantation, although considerable forcible language floated up through the hatchway. They wiped the deck with each other for about twenty minutes, and Merritt had been bumped against pretty nearly every cask in the hold before he finally succeeded in drawing the sack over the snake's head. Then it was easy, and in spite of his lack of breath the showman in Merritt asserted itself. He put the sack on the floor, and with one foot on the neck of it he prodded the snake's body with the other while he made mysterious passes with his hands until the tip of the tail disappeared. When the sack was securely tied up the python was hoisted on deck, and Merritt, his clothing torn and soiled with pitch and the miscellaneous oily and sticky things which made up the ship's cargo, climbed up after it

" 'Did you see me?' he asked proudly, throwing out his chest. 'Did you observe the wonderful hypnotic power which overcame the prowess of the serpent?'

" 'Yes, I noticed it, along toward the finish,' answered the captain, grinning skeptically as he sized up Merritt's dilapidated apparel. 'But say, professor, what I can't understand is why you didn't get it working sooner.' "

* * *

The White Bulldog.

The white bulldog stood on one side of the fence and on the other Mrs. Mullong. Unlike the dog, Mrs. Mullong did not stand—she vibrated, such was the intensity of her emotion.

"Beast!" hissed Mrs. Mullong. In the bulldog's mouth, gracefully draped over his fangs and fluttering in the air, was a jagged remnant of white cloth. On the clothesline in Mrs. Mullong's yard switched a sheet, the lower edge of which showed a discrepancy which would have been filled in nicely by the flapping remnant in the bulldog's mouth. Squared on his feet, the bulldog eyed her warily. At a faint motion of her arm he pranced lumberingly, first to one side, then the other. His eyes sparkled.

"He—he thinks it's a joke!" almost screamed Mrs. Mullong in her wrath, as this fact dawned upon her. That the marauder was blissfully unrecking of the damage he had wrought merely added to the insult. "You white heathen!" Mrs. Mullong got out. "Do you think that my wash is a merry-go-round for you to hang onto with your murdering teeth, I'd like to know? I'll show you!"

Stooping, she picked up a convenient bit of brick, crooked her arm, and saw that her enemy had prudently vanished. Giving a good imitation of a lady about to indulge in apoplexy, Mrs. Mullong removed the mutilated sheet from the line and bore it sadly into the house. "I'll cut it down for Jimmy's bed," she said.

However, there was more than that one sheet. There had been the beefsteak left on the back step by the delivery boy the day she was downtown. When she opened the door Mrs. Mullong had found only the wrapping paper left, and the bill. The tail of the white bulldog was even then just vanishing through the open place in the fence.

Moreover, muddy footprints showed constantly on the otherwise immaculate porch in the rear. Also, there were the frequent wars of the roses—feline and canine on either side, that raged indiscriminately over the alley and the various back yards. Once Mrs. Mullong had opened her door to find her 10-year-old nephew perched precariously on the summit of the back gatepost, while seated below was the amused bulldog, making a great pretense of licking his chops.

"It's a black heart you have!" Mrs. Mullong told the dog, after a pail of water had routed him.

There was no use protesting to the animal's owners, for since the pail of water episode the Davlins and the Mullongs had not been on speaking terms. In fact, Mrs. Mullong insisted that in some mysterious way the Davlins urged on the dog in his evil acts.

"Those Davlins couldn't make a dumb beast understand!" protested Mullong, in strict justice, when his wife propounded this theory.

Mrs. Mullong leaned back in her chair and looked at him scornfully. "That's all you know about that dog!" she informed him. "It's no common animal! He can tell what you say, and most times I believe he can tell what you are thinking."

Mrs. Mullong never let Jimmy play out in the back yard alone. Jimmy was 3, and the beginning and end of the world. For the white bulldog he would have made about three comfortable mouthfuls, and Mrs. Mullong had no mind to give the animal so delectable a treat. When she had to go on errands she would call Jimmy indoors from the back yard and shut the door.

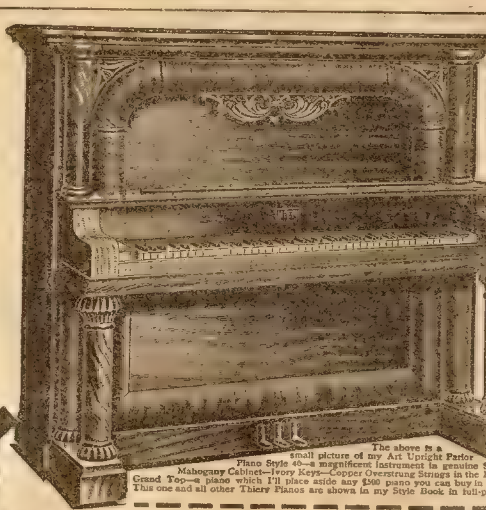
Sometimes the bulldog watched the process interestedly. Jimmy for him had the fascination of the unknown, the forbidden. Every time he approached the fence with tentatively wagging tail to reconnoiter there would be shrieks and a flying mother, who grabbed up the bundle of red-cheeked humanity and flew back with it. It was Jimmy himself who unlatched the screen door and admitted the white bulldog one warm day when his mother had gone to market, leaving the boy in the sunny kitchen.

On her return Mrs. Mullong was greeted by strange sounds. She dropped the carrots and the chops and her color fled. From the kitchen with persistent regularity came a fierce, emphatic "Gr-r-r-r!" Mrs. Mullong reached the kitchen by the air line known to mothers whose children are in dire peril and need their help. Her hand was at her heart. She even screamed despairingly.

The bulldog paid not the slightest attention to her. Seated squarely on the floor facing Jimmy was the dog. Both cropped ears pointed forward attentively, and his gaze never wavered from the baby. Before his mother's eyes Jimmy defiantly reached into the large box of matches he had purloined from the third shelf of the pantry, extracted one, and awkwardly lit it. With a snap the white bulldog extinguished it and again rolled forth his warning, protesting growl. Jimmy dropped the match hastily and frowned at the bulldog.

"Well, I never thought to see the likes of this!" said Mullong some hours later, on his return. The white bulldog was sprawled across Mrs. Mullong's lap, and she was feeding him cookies. "You said——"

"What I said, William Mullong," interrupted his wife, with high color, "was that this was a smart dog! And I'm not taking it back now!"



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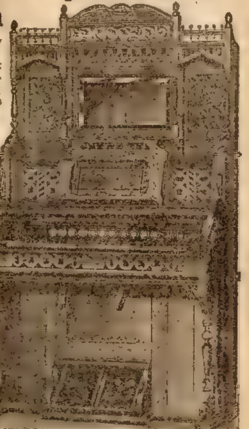

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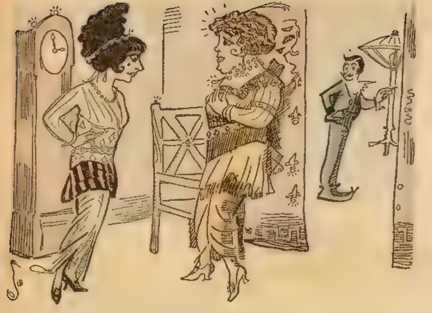


The Miss—"I don't think George has money enough for me to wed him."
Her Mother—"My dear child, when I married your father he had only seven limousines, a flying boat, three summer homes and $30,000,000

She Told Him.

Husband—"One of your New Year's resolutions was that you would not quarrel with me for a year."

"Wife—"Yes."

"Well, you are snapping at me half the time already"

Yes"

"I should just like to know what's become of your good resolutions."

"You would, eh? Well, I wanted mother to see them and so I inclosed them in a letter to her, and gave it to you to mail, and she writes me that she never received it. That's what's become of them."

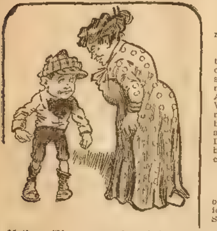
The Governess Objects.

The Employer—"By the way, the children usually eat with us."

The New Governess (firmly)—"I must object to that."

"Why?'

"They're sure to pick up such faulty notions of grammar."



Mother—"Now, remember, Willie, the Lord sees everything you do that's wrong!"
Son "Well, he certainly had a good long rest that time I was sick abed with the measles'"

GRASSHOPPER AND ANT.

How I loved fair 'Liza Jane!
Oh! without her life seemed vain.
So I sought her hand to gain,
With my tuneful wooing
Yes, it seemed to please her well;
Cupid's shot would ring the bell,
When in song my love I'd tell,
Fantasies pursuing

'Liza seldom spoke of Jim,
Though we both were fond of him;
Seemed to me his chance was slim—
I knew he was smitten
So I sat there, day by day,
Strumming many a roundelay,
While Jim stoutly toiled away,
By ambition bitten.

Finally, there came a time,
When she, weary of my rhyme,
Told me loafing was a crime.
Verse? She could not eat it!
Never mind my noble aims:
What she sought was things, not names;
So she married thrifty James
And I had to beat it!

Struck a Bonanza.

Moldy Mike—"I've struck a soft thing now."

Dusty Dan—"What's that?"

Moldy Mike—"I go inter a town, an' tell 'em I b'long to a stranded opery company, and want 'em all to be at th' schoolhouse at seven sharp, and hear me give a concert. They always come. A free show draws a crowd every time. Well, I don't git more'n halfway through me best solo, 'Mister Dooley,' than they begins ter throw eggs an' cabbages an' all sorts o' garden produce by the bushel I just gathers it up and slips out th' back door. Been livin' like a fighting cock all winter."

A Selfish Opinion of Business.

"There is only a slight difference of opinion between myself and that political economist," remarked Mr. Dustin Stax blandly.

"And what is that?"

"He thinks my business should be managed for the benefit of the public, while my idea is that the public should be managed for the benefit of my business."

Proved by Experiment.

Moldy Mike—"These 'ere newspapers is just a pack o' lies, that's wot they are '

Ragged Robert—"Wot, yeh been readin'?"

"I read an account of a feller from New York wot went inter a big hotel in a small town, and said he wanted to buy the hotel, an' made 'em an offer, an' give 'em a check wot wasn't no good, an' lived there a week on the fat o' the land 'fore he had to light out w'en the check came back, an' it never cost him a cent—that's wot the paper said"

"Mebbe that's true."

"No, it ain't

"How do yeh know?"

"How do I know? Why, quick as I read it I tried it meself—an' they kicked me out."

No Need of Card.

Mrs. de Style—"We have forgotten about the baby's cards."

Mr. de S.—"Cards?'

"Certainly. To be in the fashion, we must have cards with the baby's name and the date of his birth, and send them to our friends, so that they will know that we have a baby"

"Oh, they will know it fast enough, if they pass this house any time between midnight and morning.'

Good Start.

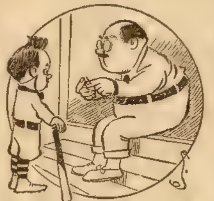
Father—"And has that young promoter cornered your heart yet?"

Tessie—"No; but he is beginning to hand out that 'one of our representatives will call upon you' line of talk."—Judge.

Hungry Truth.

Visitor (hungry)—"And at what time do you have dinner, my little friend?"

Terrible Boy—"Soon as you've gone."



Harold Grouchmore—'My teacher says the price of everything is governed by the law of supply and demand'
Father Grouchmore—"Quite so The trusts control the supply and the price is what they demand."

Cautious.

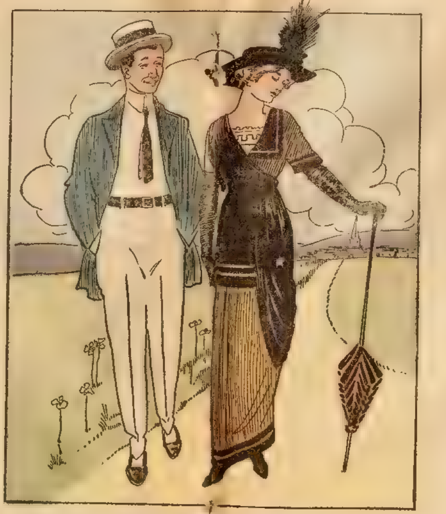
"Well, well!' said Dr. Bigbill as he met a former patient on the street, "I'm glad to see you again, Mr Brown How are you this morning?"

'First, Doctor,' said Mr Brown, cautiously, "does it cost anything to tell you?

His Exercise.

"Get any exercise while you were away?"

"Plenty of it. My wife dressed four times a day and I did the buttoning for her."



Nellie—"See those beautiful butterflies skimming over the fields?"
Ned—"Indeed! What do they seem to be skimming?"
Nellie—"The milkweeds, I think."

A Biblical Lesson.

The Sunday school teacher was making a review of the lessons.

"Who was the wisest man, James?"

Solomon."

'That's right. Now, Frank, who was the strongest man?"

Jonah."

"Wrong; but what reason have you for believing Jonah was the strongest man?"

"'Cause the whale couldn't hold him after it got him down."

Knows When to Shut Up.

Figg—"Wonder why people say 'as smart as a steel trap'? I never could see anything particularly intelligent in a steel trap."

Fogg—"A steel trap is called smart because it knows exactly the right time to shut up."

Had the Proof.

"I don't remember saying all those wicked things," declared the man at the gate.

"Gabriel, produce the dictagraph," ordered the recording angel.

He'd Wait.

Little Johnny had been naughty all day. At last, to cap the climax, he hit his small sister.

When father came home from the office, the mother told him of his son's misdeeds.

"The next time you tease your sister, you go to bed without any dinner," the father said sternly

The kiddie sat in silence for a few moments Then all of a sudden he said to his father'

"The next time I want to hit sister I'll wait until after dinner."

No Chance for Him.

Mr. Gotham—"So you are going to settle in the United States?"

New Arrival (from Mexico)—"Yes sir; they've got to drawing things a little too fine in Mexico to suit me. Why, sir, it's got so now that a man can't even get a job at overthrowing a government unless he belongs to the Revolutionists' Union, and has paid his fee regularly for six months."

Understood Children.

Applicant—"No, ma'am, I couldn't work where there's children."

Madam—"But we advertised for a girl who understood children"

Applicant—"Oh, I understand 'em, ma'am. That's why I wouldn't work where they are."

Nice Family, This.

Wife (reminiscently)—"I remember, when you asked me to say the word that was to make you happy for life, how I hesitated"

Hub (grumpily)—"Hesitated? Huh! you never did say it."

A Strange Question.

People who go to apothecaries to have their diseases prescribed for occasionally get very strange diagnoses. One day a farmer wearing a long countenance is said to have entered an apothecary's shop and remarked

"I seem to have something queer in my stomach, and I want you to give me something for it'

'What are your symptoms?" the apothecary asked

"Every little while something seems to rise up and then settle back again, and by and by it rises up again."

The apothecary put his chin in the palm of his hand and meditated. "Look here," he said, gravely, "you haven't gone and swallowed an elevator, have you?"

Did She Mean It?

Mrs. D. decided to move into the country for the summer, and was both surprised and delighted to learn that an old friend of hers resided in the same place. Meeting this friend on the street, Mrs. D. said'

"I am quite a near neighbor of yours, now! I have taken a house by the river"

'Oh, I hope you will drop in some day," replied the friend.

How the Acquaintance Began.

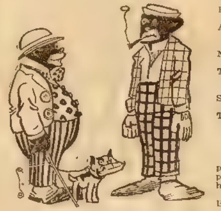
"But, Helen, how did you make the acquaintance of your second husband?"

"It was quite romantic. I was out walking with my first, when my second husband came along in a motor and ran him down. That was the beginning of our friendship."

The Skittish Horse.

Mr. Jones—"See here! This horse you sold me runs up on the sidewalk every time he sees an auto."

"Dealer—"Well, you don't expect a fifty-dollar horse to climb a telegraph pole or a tree, do you!"



Mose—"Wouldn't you like to see wealth more equally divided?"
Ab—"Suttinly, suttinly; just as soon as Ah's spent dis 50 cents!'

Expensive Spouse.

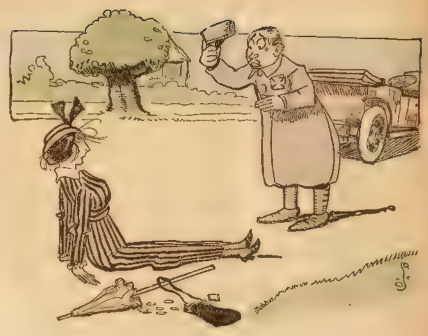
Wife—"Oh, I saw the dearest little hat today"

Hub—"That's just like you—always looking for the dearest instead of the moderately priced"

The Fatal Day Was Near.

"Charles seems to be very exacting," said a fond mamma to the dear girl who was dressing for the wedding.

"Never mind, mamma," said she sweetly "They are his last wishes."



Chauffeur—"Let me help you into the car and take you to a hospital, ma am!"
Victim—"Thank you!"
Chauffeur—"Well, well' Of all the ladies I've run over, you're the only one that's had the courtesy to thank me!"

THE OVERWORKED MONUMENT.

She followed him unto his grave
And reared a marble rare,
And chiseled on this sentence sweet.
"My grief I cannot bear '

She mourned a year and then was wed,
And they chiseled on that stone
A single word, and it reads
"My grief I cannot bear—alone."

But soon she wore her weeds again,
And they turned that stone about,
And on it traced this touching line,
"My life's light has gone out."

Not long she walked in darkness lone
Around that marble patch,
The bells rang out, the sculptor wrote,
"I've struck another match."

She's happy now with number four,
But all the neighbors say
That she will be a busy girl
On Resurrection Day.

Truly Graphic.

There was a change of curates in the parish, and shortly after one of the prominent men of the congregation asked his chauffeur:

"How do you like the new curate, Barney?"

"Middlin'," replied Barney, "but he can't come up to the old one. 'Twas himself could tell ye all about hell. Shure, to hear him describe it, you'd think he was born, bred, and reared there."

A Hopeless Case.

"This," said the asylum attendant, pointing to the patient in a padded cell who was dodging back and forth, "is what we consider a hopeless case"

"What's the matter with him?" inquired the visitor

"He thinks he is continually dodging automobiles and roller skates.

The Editor's Choice.

"You don't seem to care much for original ideas," said the would-be contributor, as he gathered up his manuscript

"No," replied the cold-blooded editor: "we'd rather have good ones

Alarming Figures.

Old Lady—"I feel awful nervous. Are you sure we won't have any accidents?"

Conductor (fond of statistics)—"Every person who rides on a railway takes one chance in 1,491,910 chances of being killed."

Old Lady—"La' sakes' Why didn't that rascally agent tell me so before I bought my ticket?"

Quite a Change.

"Now, I know, you have been gambling again and breaking my heart. But you don't care for that!"

"But, darling, I won, and I've brought every cent of my winnings home to you."

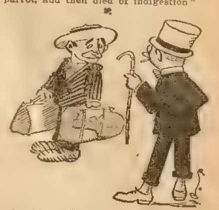
"Oh, you dear, considerate man. Always thinking of your little wife, aren't you, pet?"

The Cat's Feast.

"I don't know how we shall face our neighbors when they return."

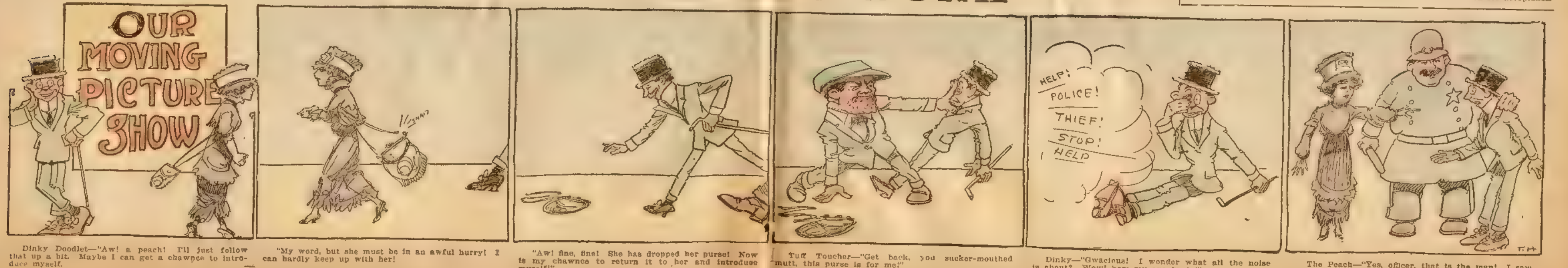
"What has happened?"

"We were taking care of their cat and their parrot. Yesterday the cat ate the parrot, and then died of indigestion"



Lewkins—"What kind are the mosquitoes out there?"
Hammond—"At a hundred yards some of them are often taken for aeroplanes."

IT DID NOT WORK


OUR MOVING PICTURE SHOW
HELP!
POLICE!
THIEF!
STOP!
HELP
T.H.

Dinky Doodlet—"Aw! a peach! I'll just follow that up a bit. Maybe I can get a chawnce to introduce myself.

"My word, but she must be in an awful hurry! I can hardly keep up with her!

"Aw! fine, fine! She has dropped her purse! Now is my chawnce to return it to her and introduse myself!"

Tuff Toucher—"Get back, you sucker-mouthed mutt, this purse is for me!"
Dinky—"Sir, I'll have you arrested for taking liberties with me person!"

Dinky—"Gwacious! I wonder what all the noise is about? Wow! how my eye hurts'"

The Peach—"Yes, officer, that is the man' I saw him following right behind me!"
Officer—"All right, I'll take him to jail!"

Mad Magic Afloat

Or, THE SHIP OF ILL OMEN

By William H. Manning

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Begun in No. 28, July 11. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents, or by mail from the office of publication.

CHAPTER X.

OUR COMING DOOM.

I WAITED for further attack, but none came. Listening, I heard only the silght straining of the ship's timbers. The suspense of waiting for a foe who was ready to slash at me with that ugly knife was too much for me and I had a feverish desire to be doing something. Plunging recklessly forward I reached for him here, there, all over the stateroom. He was not there.

I found the door I had left locked wide open. Closing it, I made a light. On the lower blanket was a tiny smear of red, and another on my side, but the wound was so trivial that blood merely oozed out feebly. I looked outside and saw nobody. The door-key was on the floor, poked out by whoever had picked the lock.

Wondering, I seated myself on the berth, but promptly rose. The disarranged blanket showed a bulge at the front, and under the bulge I found my carved dagger, which I had left at the back of the berth when I went to sleep. The inference was plain.

The intruder had not come to murder me, but to secure the dagger, and probably my wound was the result of accident. So I reasoned, but the rest of the mystery was too deep for me. Who was the would-be thief?

In the morning I told everything to Poindexter, hoping to get light. He listened attentively, examined the knife, and then met my gaze frankly.

"Mr. Harding," he said, "let me tell you something. My relations with Torrington may be kept secret for now, I trust, but not so other matters. This dagger was made in Ildrik's country."

"Where is that?" I asked bluntly.

"In the Menloav Islands. Ildrik is a Dahbl of Kaswear, or, in plain English, a prince of the purple plume. That means that he has royal blood, and, in certain contingencies, is in line of succession to the native throne. There are, however, several Dahbls. Besides this, he is——"

Poindexter hesitated and finished in a different line.

"Being of high caste, he knows all about his people, their secret rites, classes, and so on. To him this dagger talks plainly—he has told me about it, after first seeing it when shown by you—and he is vastly puzzled by its presence in the Gak-el-Zinto. If we saw a mere sailor have it we should infer that he had found or stolen it, but I think we cannot account for it in that way. We believe there is a Menloav in this ship, a native of the class known as Phorga, but we have seen only Americans in cabin and steerage. What have you seen—anybody like Ildrik?"

"Certainly not. Only Americans, as far as I can see."

"Can we have a stowaway?"

"I have not suspected it, yet there have been odd happenings. The assault upon Barton, the mate, and the ransacking of Torrington's room; the attempt to fling me overboard, the disappearance of the Trail of Life from under the table, and the dropping of the dagger there——"

"Exactly!" and Poindexter nodded sharply. "Now, a stowaway must eat. Have you missed any food from your pantry?"

"I've not missed any, but I've been so little in love with my unwilling berth as steward that I have given that point no attention."

"May I ask you to note it henceforth?"

"Surely!"

"If food disappears mysteriously we can feel certain there is a stowaway, and that will interest me greatly."

"Let us not forget one point. Remember that assault upon Barton and the upheaval of Torrington's room. It has been assumed that the unknown of that occasion did not come down the companionway, and those who ought to know talked of a secret passage, that would enable a steerage hand to pass to the cabin, but I understand that the captain had the carpenter close that passage."

"There was hammering. Now, a ship cannot have secret rooms and passages like a house, for quarters are too contracted. A single, narrow way might be contrived for a few yards, and, we are told, was, but if it has been closed—what then?" Poindexter demanded.

"Seems to me the captain was confounded lax in his investigation. His room was ransacked, but I've not heard that he made special efforts to discover who did it."

"Torrington, a marvel of action when stirred up to it, always was lax about small things. But, Harding, I don't think the man who has done all this is a forecastle sailor."

"And you do think there is a stowaway?"

"Yes."

"If so," I exploded, "he showed mighty poor taste in coming aboard."

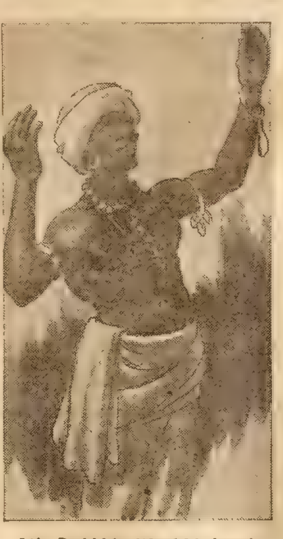
"He probably did not know what he was venturing into. Now, my dear sir, if there is such a man I wish, I greatly wish that we may detect him. Can you help?"

"I'll do my best," I replied.

"By all means, do it, Harding. It may make a world of difference in our fortunes. If there is a man hidden away, he——"

Poindexter hesitated, and then calmly pursued:

"He can hardly be a friend of our enemies, so we may class him as an unknown quantity."



Like Dahbl he lifted his hand.

I think I bent my brows, for I disliked these halfway confidences, but the speaker suddenly took my arm.

"May I ask you to go with me to Torrington's room?" he said amiably. "If that remarkable skipper leaves his private quarters so open, he can hardly object if we intrude, unless we injure his property."

"Have you found anything valuable to us?" I asked.

"No, but the matter of the course these scoundrels are laying concerns us intimately, and we want to know their port—Providence save the mark! Here, Harding," for we had now entered, "is a chart of the Atlantic. You see this land?" and he touched a finger on the chart.

"Yes. It is the coast of Africa."

"Have you knowledge of this particular region?"

"Cape Foulface is hard by your thumb. That's a bad vicinity, Poindexter. I've sailed past there in old days, and been told that the worst native tribes of the coast live there—Krelitats, or something like it—man-eaters, and infernally cruel even for their sort. For Heaven's sake, don't tell me our course is laid for there!"

"I have every reason to believe it is. I have had an eye to the binnacle compass, the observations taken by Barton—Torrington never takes the sun—together with sundry words dropped by the two mates. One word boomed home to my brain—Krelitats!"

"But why—why?" I cried, staggered.

"Is it still a mystery to you why you were kidnaped?"

"Yes."

"There is no doubt as to my case," Poindexter continued evenly. "It happens that Torrington hates me—though not for a matter of love or money, as is usually the cause of trouble—and I think I follow his cold-blooded scheme. Once he fetches to the African Coast, he has only to set me ashore and my fate will be the most wretched that man can conceive. The Krelitats will be there!"

"But Miss Althea!" I cried. "Would the scoundrel——"

"He would do anything, Harding. The utter impossibility of finding any logical explanation of why the hapless lady and yourself were taken along leads to the conclusion that Torrington believed he would add to my misery by placing good friends of mine in the same wretched plight."

"To me, that explanation is not satisfactory," I said, after a moment's thought. "It does not seem to explain, though I can give no better guess, just now. What manner of a fiend is the captain that he should do this thing? You and I are men, and the lot of man is adventure and suffering, but Althea——"

"Is here to speak for herself!"

We turned abruptly. She was, indeed, there. All the color had gone from her face, and its pallor was nerve-tearing to me, but she was strangely composed.

"I have listened," she added steadily, "ever since you entered this room, and I know what you have said. Believe me, gentlemen, Captain Torrington will never set me ashore on the African Coast. Perhaps others will, but not he. If it so be that we sight that accursed land, he will come to the cabin table to eat one meal too many, and it will be his last. The table is always equipped with knives!"

CHAPTER XI.

A DESPERATE RESORT.

TOO much startled by the appearance of the girl and the fact that she had overheard our talk to master words, I only stared in silence, but Poindexter was fully equal to the occasion. His composure was unruffled, and his voice sounded convincing as he replied to Althea.

"Be reassured, Miss Leerick," he said, "we shall never fetch to Cape Foulface."

"How," she demanded, can it be prevented?"

"The answer is broad, but, first of all, let me say that though Torrington and his officers think we are laying a course for that infamous region, they are mistaken. We are enough wide of the course to carry us clear of Foulface."

"How can that be?" I asked, rather sharply. "Granted that the captain never takes the sun, is not Barton a capable navigator?"

"I believe him to be capable. Yet, we are off our course, and it is due to——"

He paused, stepped into the cabin, and took a keen look in that quarter. Then he came back with a smile on his fine face.

"Our compass is bewitched. Somebody I could name has had chance to meddle with it secretly. We shall touch the African Coast, if at all, well north of Cape Foulface. If we arrive there our case may be desperate, but we shall not be among the Krelitats. True, we can hardly hope to be far from natives, but there are degrees of barbarism."

"But all that coast is unsettled?" replied Althea, quickly.

"Yes."

"Which means a desperate situation if we arrive there. If the natives spare us, how shall we, without weapons, get food? You heard my plan, a moment ago."

"If the situation grows acute, Miss Leerick, a man may be found to silence that sin-steeped wretch, Torrington."

"I did not say a man," she retorted.

"A man will be found," Poindexter assured her. Now, my dear young lady, I beg that you will place confidence in your friends. Harding, Ildrik, and myself make a trio that can certainly save us from the fate chosen by our foes. Perhaps our salvation is very near at hand. Listen! This very night a scheme will be tried——"

He stopped short, stepped into the cabin again, and then tried to talk rapidly with us for a few minutes.

"We must not be seen here, for discovery would be untimely. In a word, I have had speech with one of the crew, have been heard with respect, and I hope that a movement will be afoot in the forecastle presently that will lead to a change in the mastery of the ship before another day breaks. I am to make a bold attempt——"

Ildrik appeared at the door.

"No more now!" he said hastily. "Torrington has started for the companionway. Scatter!"

"I'll explain later," added Poindexter, and we scattered as had been suggested.

Retreating to my pantry, I meditated anxiously. In spite of talk of rebellion against the captain, I was miserably depressed, and chiefly by Althea's mental mood. It was plain that she had brooded over her danger until she was so nervous and wretched that she was hardly to be held accountable for her words. It was impossible to imagine such a well-conditioned woman as meditating a fatal assault upon our chief foe while she had male allies to rely upon, and yet that was what she was doing.

She was overwrought, and as I realized it my spirits dropped to low mark. She needed help sorely, and I was eager to give it, but I was a humble steward in a ship with thirty men in opposition. What could I do?

Something like an answer came when Poindexter next found opportunity to speak with me privately. After that I saw night approach with varied emotions. Now and then hope rose like a feeble blaze, but it was not my prevailing mood.

We were to try and seize the Gak-el-Zinto, and the chance was so desperate that my courage flagged painfully. Had anybody bought my heart that day for a lump of lead, I could almost say he

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would have found it what he bargained for.

Yet, I was not in a cowardly mood, and as the critical moment came I found myself in a stony calm. Occasionally patting the carved dagger, I was ready to fight by the side of my friends.

The night fell cloudy and dark, though not to a radical degree. Out of the southwest a steady breeze beat upon our starboard quarter, but we rode on a level keel and the deck lay without an unnatural pitch. Besides the bow lights we had a lantern in either side of the waist, as well as at the stern. Aloft, the masts rose like vanishing ghosts, between which the canvas was dimly visible in gray patches.

This was the scene that met my eyes as I gained the deck at one o'clock at night, two bells having just struck. I was there to keep my compact with Poindexter, and to try and capture the ship.

I saw Emerson stumping the deck, I saw the man at the wheel, but it was something else that interested me most. Our plan was definitely formed, and—where were the others?

Almost before I had time to study the situation I saw the second mate drop, and I bounded to that point. Poindexter had him fast, with a hand over his mouth. He had leaped upon him and flung him down.

"Cords and the gag!" said my ally, his voice as unshaking as if nothing was afoot out of the common.

I had them ready, and we bound and gagged Emerson in silence. If the fellow at the wheel saw he did not heed.

Poindexter snapped his fingers softly and dark figures stole aft. I knew they were sailors, brought by Ildrik, according to the prearranged plan, and it looked more promising. I slipped to the head of the companionway and halted. It was my part to guard that vital artery of the ship, and Poindexter's to argue with the sailors.

I did not hear that argument, but there was light enough to make a study from other things. Softly the hum of Poindexter's voice carried to my ears, and I imagined him offering to each helper of the crew enough money to make him a man of leisure for the rest of his life. A hearing had been granted to him, and perhaps——

Then I forgot to watch. Back of the men was Ildrik, and oddly employed. His hands moved constantly, strangely, as if intent upon some highly important task, and as he described erratic but graceful curves in the air he held my gaze fast.

Enough had been told me to make all this clear. I knew that the Dahbl of the Menloav Islands was endeavoring to put a spell upon the hands, and that we relied upon that spell to cause them to listen to our spokesman, and, listening, to be convinced and won over to our cause. We had pinned our faith to the dusky robe of magic.

The plan did not suit me. Weary of this passive game, I was athirst for action, for fighting. Just then I was in a coldly aggressive mood, when I verily believe that if I had possessed revolvers I would have turned the muzzles on the whole foul crew and pulled away at the trigger merrily. But I had not one weapon of the kind.

Ah!—Poindexter was winning his way. I saw that, saw him make converts. He was promising big. Ease and plenty faced the Jack-tars, in place of riding the yards in howling gales. They yielded partly, and persuasion walked with high head. Almost we had them fast, almost we had taken the Gak-el-Zinto without a blow.

Something—I know not what—shifted my gaze. I saw a man behind the group, closer to Ildrik, the Dahbl, than to any one else. Up from somewhere he rose, getting himself into the dim light—a slight, sparsely-clad fellow with a long, lean face that failed to show white in the lantern-rays. I stared blankly at one I had never seen before in the ship, recognizing the fact that, except for stature, he was strangely like Ildrik. Startled, I recalled our conjectures as to a stowaway, feeling that the man was there.

Startled, I say, I tried to take a forward step, but was checked by certain motions made by the stranger. Like the Dahbl he lifted his hands; he waved them oddly, yet gracefully, and a new mood fell upon the plain sailors. They stirred restlessly, and I saw with consternation that Poindexter was losing his hold upon them

Little as I knew of things mystic, I caught the idea that this stowaway was destroying Ildrik's spell.

Casting off my stupefaction, I took a step toward the slight man, determined to quell his interference even if by doing violence, but I was too late. The sailor who had done most of the talking with Poindexter shook himself as if casting off shackles.

"No, you don't!" he snarled. "No treachery here. Eh, lads? You can say the rest with the skipper for your listener."

Then he raised his voice in a bellowing shout.

"Cabin, ahoy! This way, Captain Torrington. Treachery! Mutiny! Cabin, ahoy, I say!"

We had been dealing with the starboard watch, but the call carried clearly, and sailors are alert. The larboard division heard, they leaped to the forecastle ladder and footed it up the rungs like cats. Nor did they come alone. Torrington appeared with astonishing celerity, and presently his sneering laugh sounded in our ears.

"More mental drunkenness, eh? Fools in Vanity Fair! At them, lads! It is their scheme to scuttle the ship and drown us all. At them!"

It nettles me even now to think what followed; I have not the disposition to dwell upon it. We fought—yes, and lustily, Poindexter, Ildrik, and I, but why mention it? We were three opposed to a shipful. Even then I was wise enough to kill no sailor, when fighting was folly, and I did not draw my carved dagger, but I sent out my fists lustily, and hammered various knaves until I was beaten down.

The end was inevitable. We were overpowered, bound and made helpless, after which the captain stood over us gloating and mocking.

"Well, well, well!" he jibed. "Three escaped from the madhouse. At daybreak we will hang the lot. Babes in the wood, do you think me asleep?"

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT CAME AT NIGHT.

I PASSED the rest of the night locked in my room, fretting, fuming, and alternately despondent and ugly. Torrington appeared early and stood over me as I lay bound and helpless. Expecting speedy end to my mortal career, I was surprised to see him smile in the old way.

"Jerry,' he remarked, "you are the biggest fool of your weight I ever saw. Did you really think you could capture this ship? Why didn't you think twice when at home before you wrote your name down on the articles? J. Doolittle, you signed yourself, but I didn't see the fate that lurked in your name. You are lazy, Jerry, mightily inclined to shirk honest labor, but I'll put an end to it. Hereafter, you must not do little but do much. Jerry, 'tis the lot of Adam's sons!"

His jests smacked strongly of childishness, but the fellow had a manner—the joviality of his unique kind of sin—that robbed them of the commonplace. He was a strange person, that skipper.

I met his smile with a sullen scowl.

"I suppose you will hang me now," I growled.

"Wrong, as usual, Jerry! You are too useful in the Gak-el-Zinto. Your boast that you have served as steward for thirty years seems perfectly true——"

"You know I was never a steward until you shanghaied me, and that I never signed the articles to sail in this vile ship——"

"Jerry, Jerry!" he scoffed. "Has it come to the pass that a man in my ship should be untruthful? If so, other things are possible."

He tapped a finger upon my breast.

"Look ye!" he added, a sudden shift in his tone, for it now rang keen as a well-tempered blade. "Poindexter and his nigger chum are locked in their cabin, and there they stay until we reel off a long string of knots. You, however, are to return to your duties and do your work properly. See that you do! I won't humor you by hanging you, but for every infraction of ship's rules and my wishes you shall, from now on, be seized up to the mast and have your back ribboned by the cat. Ay, you shall be flogged soundly. Remember! Now, get to work!"

He slashed my bonds and sauntered out of the room carelessly.

Filled with impotent rage I lay sulking for a while, and then, seeing the inevitable, rose and went about my duties. First of all, in the way of discoveries, I found Monsieur, the swordmaster, sitting in the cabin. Plainly, he was there to prevent my communicating with Poindexter.

Next, going to my pantry, I discovered that a considerable store of food had vanished mysteriously. Again, plainly, the stowaway had seen fit to stock up while he could.

I thought more about that stowaway than was necessary, but it was so certain, and this I ultimately knew to be a fact, that he had overcome Ildrik by superior magic that it was not a waste of time to consider him thoughtfully. Just how should I class him in the assorted lot that filled that unholy ship? It was many days before I knew.

Beginning that morning, there was a long, quiet time aboard the Gak-el-Zinto. Poindexter and Ildrik were constantly under lock and key, and the few words I had with them amounted to nothing worthy of record. Torrington ruled absolutely. He acted the host to Althea, and I will be honest enough to say that I never saw him trespass upon good breeding; he played at swords with Monsieur, and boxed with the burly Professor.

Meanwhile I—I set food before the visible part of the cabin party and otherwise labored as a steward. It was fate. I am afraid my remarks when alone were not always in line with my early teachings, but solitary abuse of the captain was my one comfort.

Strange ship! Three kidnaped parties, an unknown voyage, a Dahbl of the Menloav Islands, and a dusky stowaway who, as far as I could see, was never hunted for; and a captain who twice nearly every day turned his deck into a fencing and boxing arena, enjoying himself vastly on this, his pleasure trip—a skipper at times gay and sunny, usually courteous and thoughtful of the comforts of others, and yet—that "yet" was a giant. Like Torrington, it bristled with dreadful probabilities.

He was taking Poindexter to a frightful death, and logic said that Althea, her maid, and myself were marked for the same fate. I had been unable to make any converts to our interests. None of the forecastle hands would talk with me, and the cook, compelled to speak of food problems, was nevertheless proof against all my blandishments. Our poor little handful of unfortunates were as few, as feeble, as when we slipped out of New Bedford with that quartering breeze bellying our canvas so bravely.

Sometimes I talked with Poindexter through his locked door, and always he asserted that the captain would not succeed in carrying us to Cape Foulface and the cannibal natives, saying, as he had said before, that the compass was wrong and would fetch us far north of that appropriately-named point of land, but he could not say where we should touch the coast of Africa, nor offer hope that it would be among friendly blacks.

This summary brings affairs to the eventful second day of August, a day with a following evening long to be remembered. After a long stretch of fine weather we had caught a half-gale breeze that followed us boisterously, flinging disagreeable seas against our stern, and giving the Gak-el-Zinto a plunge and roll that nobody liked; while all the time the sky held thick with cloud-banks of black, streaked with a barely lighter tone. The evening, in particular, was intensely dark.

I turned in all standing, and thus it was that, when I heard a gentle knocking at my door, after a few hours' sleep, I was quickly in the doorway.

It was Hannah who had knocked, and behind her was Althea. The swinging light showed no especial perturbation in their manner, though Miss Leerick was plainly worried.

"I can't sleep!" she said hurriedly.

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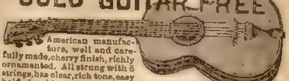

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"When I was on deck it seemed to me we were carrying a dangerous amount of canvas, and we are going so very fast."

"We surely are making good time."

"How many knots?"

"Twelve, I suspect."

"I have not seen the log hove in twenty-four hours."

"With this wind astern it would be useless. The following seas would bring the log-chip home, so our speed cannot even be estimated by trying to run the line."

"Yet we race along, heedless of the fact that, as you estimate it, we may be nearing the African Coast."

"The navigators do not so estimate it——"

"Ah! but they think we are laying a course for Cape Foulface, whereas Mr. Poindexter says we shall, because of our actual course, reach land much sooner."

"Yes," I admitted.

"How much sooner?"

"Even Poindexter cannot say that. A full day or more, though you will remember that we lack all information. We have been able to find no log-book, and do not know our average speed. We do not know what the observations have shown——"

"I wish they would shorten sail. It is worrisome to race along in this black night with our yards practically packed. 'Tis no time to carry on. If we fetched to land, or drove upon another ship, our doom would be certain."

Oddly enough, it heartened me to hear her talk that way. While she worried about such things it showed that her courage was otherwise good. Anything was better than dread of physical danger from man. It seemed that she was less troubled by peril from Torrington.

"Another thing," she suddenly added, before I could answer. "Have you heard strange sounds in the ship of late?"

"Nothing more than the usual straining and groaning of the woodwork."

"I have, and so has Hannah. Something like hammering; something, too, like the grating of an auger. That mysterious stowaway! Is it possible, Mr. Harding, that he would scuttle the ship and sink us?"

"Impossible! He has his own life to guard, and——"

I stopped short. There was a stir, a crash, and a human form, a man bound and gagged, rolled past us and brought up forcibly against the bulkhead. Eyes blazing with rage looked up at us, and our quiet talk was turned into a plague of doubt, mystery, and fear.

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WHY SHE STAYED.

Stevens knew by his wife's expression that she had something to tell.

"Well, what's doing?" he asked cheerfully, as he hung up his hat.

"Mrs. Jenkinson was here this afternoon," responded Mrs. Stevens.

"Wanted money for one of her pet charities? Except for her, Maysie, we might know what to do with our surplus."

"She didn't ask for money this time, Jim. She merely wished me to do her a little favor."

"Well, I suppose you were willing."

"Yes, I was willing, but I wasn't sure you would be. You see, she asked me to take care of a little girl for a week or so until she can get her into a certain orphans' home where she thinks there will be a vacancy soon.

"Mrs. Jenkinson certainly isn't lacking in nerve, is she? What did you say to her?"

"I said yes."

"You did! Well, when is our guest coming?"

"She's here, Jimmy. Mrs. Jenkinson brought her with her, and I couldn't refuse to keep the little thing for a short time. She was left without relatives in all the world, and some neighbors had taken her to the settlement. I hope you won't mind having a baby in the house for a little while."

"I guess I can stand it all right, Maysie, but I want to tell you something. Mrs. Jenkinson brought that child to us in the hope that we would keep her permanently. But she can't pull off a job like that on us! You know I'm unalterably opposed to adopting a child."

"I'm quite sure she has no idea that we will keep Faith."

"Faith? Why, that was my grandmother's name. Did you know Grandmother Stevens' name was Faith?"

"Yes, I knew it. It's a funny, quaint old name, isn't it?"

"I think it's a beautiful, inspiring name, Maysie. If you'd only known my grandmother you'd think so, too."

"Perhaps. Do you care to see the baby?" Mrs. Stevens led the way into the library where a little white bundle lay on the floor. The child slept surrounded by a scattered deck of cards.

"She went to sleep playing, so I threw my white shawl over her, and left her for you to see," explained Mrs. Stevens softly.

"A slumbering queen of hearts," smiled Stevens. "How old is she?"

"Nearly 2. I ought to put her to bed."

"She'll probably howl when you pick her up, but I suppose that's part of the game," Stevens remarked resignedly. But the small guest did not cry when Mrs. Stevens lifted her from the floor. She opened a pair of round brown eyes and then yawned. Next, noticing a new acquaintance in Stevens, she stretched out her hands toward him with a gurgling little laugh.

"Well, I must say, you're a good sport, Faith," he said, as he took the little roseleaf fingers in his own hand. "Aren't you going to give her anything to eat, Maysie?"

"Of course. Come, baby."

The next morning after his early breakfast Stevens tiptoed into the guestroom where Faith, fenced in by pillows, lay on the large bed.

"She's some sleeper, all right" said he. "She never whimpered, except once, all night, and then I guess you didn't hear her. I got up and gave her some water, and she said 'Dink, ba-ba! Dink.' She's some sport of an infant. It's funny you didn't hear her."

Mrs. Stevens merely smiled, and she smiled again that evening when Stevens came home with a folding go-cart and a tiny gold ring.

"Well, you see," he explained, "I thought the youngster ought to get out while she's here, and we can donate the cart to the asylum that takes her."

"But how extravagant of you to buy that gold ring, Jimmy."

"Oh, it didn't cost much, and Stevens laughed. "I really think Miss Baby ought to have a souvenir of her sojourn with us."

The next night he brought a box of blocks, and by the end of the week there were so many toys in the house that Mrs. Stevens remarked that he had better buy a trunk to pack the baby's things in when she left.

"Maysie," Stevens coughed deprecatingly, "I don't believe we'd better let that child go. Of course I don't believe in adopting children, but you see, it's different with Faith. She just seems to fit us. And even her name makes it seem as if she were really ours, and——"

"Jimmy," Mrs. Stevens' voice was unsteady. "I must tell you. I don't know what you'll think of me, but the baby's name was not Faith until she came here. I named her. I just suddenly thought that, maybe, perhaps——"

"That you could bunko me. Well, you most certainly have, Maysie. I'm surprised at you. Yes, surprised and—well, if you must know, delighted. Don't cry, dear. Whatever she was before, she'll always be our Faith now."

* * *

Not Mercenary.

"Sir," said the young man, with much respect, "I know that you are a millionaire, and that I am poor. It seems presumptuous in me to aspire to the hand of your daughter. But I have thought the matter out, and with some diffidence I have resolved to make my request. Love, sir, is not bound by sordid considerations or by mere social convenience. I have a very real attachment for your daughter, and I pray that you will put no obstacle in the way of our early marriage."

The old man seemed interested in the young fellow, and inclined to listen.

"Quite so," said he. "As you know, I am not in the habit of sticking at trifles, providing the main purpose is straight. But which of my girls do you want?"

The young man breathed a sigh of relief, and courteously replied: "Oh, I'll leave that to you, sir."

* * *

What Johnny Had.

As a reward for good behavior Johnny was allowed to come to the dinner table when company was expected. He wanted to appear big, too, so he chose a low chair which brought his mouth just to the top of the table. But he didn't mind this because it was on a line with his plate and he was not so likely to drop anything while eating. He ate ravenously of everything, having nothing to say to the guests, as his mother had told him to remember that good children are seen, not heard. Finally, after dessert, when there was a lull in the conversation, he exclaimed:

"Say, pop, you can't guess what I've got under the table?"

"No, my son," said his father, with an indulgent glance, "what is it?"

"Stomach ache!" shouted Johnny gleefully.

* * *

Dawn Was Late.

Ah! The audience held its breath and simply thr-r-rilled as Bravado Jack, the hero, killed the last of the Indians. He staggered about, he almost fainted with the loss of blood. Then he gazed about him, and suddenly his voice rang out with hope.

"See!" he cried, "the dawn breaks upon yon topmost heights!"

The stage remained in almost total darkness.

"See!" he yelled again. "The dawn breaks upon yon topmost heights!" Still darkness reigned. "The dawn! The dawn!" he screamed, raging about the stage. "It breaks! The dawn!"

A head popped over the mountain top. "'Old 'ard guv'nor!" said the head. "Don't be in such a des'p'rate 'urry! Some one's bin an' switched the 'lectricity orf!"

* * *

Forty Thieves.

An old farmer on his first visit to New York thought he would go to the theater and see the play called "Forty Thieves." When he got to the theater he asked the man in the box office if they were playing the "Forty Thieves" there, and on being informed they were, and without asking the price of the seats, told the box office man that he wanted a tip-top seat, and laid a five-dollar bill down. The box office man laid the ticket down and $3 in change. The farmer (accustomed to 25-cent shows) picked up the $3 and walked off without his ticket, whereupon the box office man shouted:

"See here, sir! You've forgotten your ticket!"

The farmer shouted back: "Keep it, gol darn yer! I don't want to see the other thirty-nine!"

* * *

Daring Them.

"Indeed," the lecturer went on in a quizzical way, "I believe I am justified in asserting that nine women out of ten practically propose to the men they become engaged to. As a test, I would ask all married men in the audience whose wives virtually popped the question to them to rise."

There was a subdued rustle in the auditorium, and in the dense silence that ensued could be heard sibilant feminine whispers in concert: "Just you dare stand up!"

The Sabbath.

A gentleman attached to our embassy at London tells this story of Sabbath-breaking north of the Tweed.

One brawny Scot was hammering away at the bottom of his wheelbarrow when his wife came to the door.

"Mon! Mon!" she exclaimed, "you're making such clatter. What wull the neebours say?"

"Never mind the neebours," returned the busy husband. "I maun get ma barrow mendit."

"Oh, but Donal', it's vera wrong to wurk on Sawbath!" protested the good woman. "Ye ought to use screws."

* * *

Another "Solomon Grundy."

"I am inclined to think," said a man, "that our friend, Mr. Grafton Grabb, was created on the Sabbath."

"For what reason?"

"We are told that an honest man is the noblest work of the Creator, and also that on the seventh day the Creator rested."

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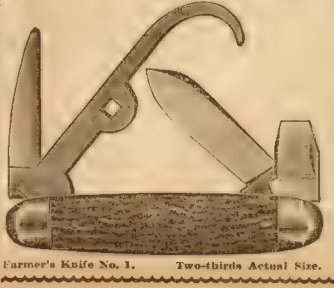

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Entered as second-class matter June 26, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

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By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

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COPIES WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

Occasionally a promising young man pays.

Cats and candidates love to roost on the fence.

When trouble goes to sleep, smash the alarm clock.

Enthusiasm is to a man what powder is to a bullet.

Silence is golden, yet some people won't shut up!

Two heads are better than one—except in a family.

When members of a family quarrel a lot of truth leaks out.

Be sure you are right before throwing over the high speed lever.

The garrulous fool usually cuts his throat with his own tongue.

There is more or less guile in the smile a man generates when he is losing.

No man ever knows how many friends he has lost by handing them advice.

It's awfully hard for a girl with a pretty ankle to keep her shoe laces tied.

Even a poor actor can make a hit with the audience by breaking a lot of dishes.

When the average man asks for justice and gets it, he is apt to recognize that he asked too much.

The average man's idea of being unselfish is to let some other fellow have something he doesn't want.

Most men might be fairly happy if they could forget all the mean things they know about themselves.

Occasionally a girl knowingly marries the wrong man rather than run the risk of not getting married at all.

Methuselah had a grudge against his wives, perhaps, and kept on living to beat them out of the insurance.

When a man places his bubble of greatness on exhibition there is always somebody who wants to stick a pin in it.

A man may never realize what it is to be disappointed in love until he has been led to the altar by the female of his choice.

"A little learning is a dangerous thing," we are told. Also, "Much learning maketh a man mad." So what are we going to do about it?

It would surprise the late lamented if he could hear his widow telling her second husband what a noble, kind and generous man the first was.

No, Cordelia, it doesn't necessarily mean that a young man means business because he calls every Sunday night. Perhaps the lid is on in your town and he has nowhere else to loaf.

PEPPERS

Used Tact.

A young man who had just been engaged as a commercial traveler by an important firm was warned that the great fault of his predecessor had been want of tact. The young man started out, and, to the surprise of his employers, orders began to come in at a quite unprecedented rate.

[illegible] climax came when a big order was sent in from a firm with whom the wholesale house had had a bitter quarrel, ending in a total stoppage of business.

The traveler's employers sent for him on his return and asked him how he had managed that particular miracle.

"I used tact, sir," was the reply, "as you warned me to. When I got to Mr. B.'s shop he came up and asked me what firm I represented. Remembering the circumstances, I handed him my card and said: 'Why, these blooming idiots!'"

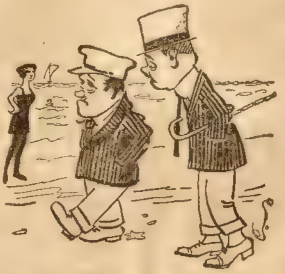
❦

Found at Last.

One evening, when a water inspector was going his round, he stopped at one of the mains in a busy street to turn off the water owing to some repairs. He had just put the handle on the tap and begun turning when a hand was placed on his shoulder by a tipsy gentleman, who said, in a drunken tone:

"So I have found you at last, have I? It's you that's turning the street round, is it?"

❦



Rumley—"Did you understand all that the minister said when you were married?"

Benham—"I remember one thing—that he asked me if there was any reason why sentence should not be passed upon me."

❦

Stretching the Truth.

Mayor Hunt of Cincinnati said one day of a notorious political boss:

"They who call this fellow honest have to stretch the truth a little. They have to stretch it like the old colored farmer of Paint Rock.

"This old farmer said to a young chap:

"'Look 'heah, Calhoun, Ah don' min' yore co'tin mah gal Lillian, but Ah'd ruther yo' wouldn't come round mah house no mo'.

"'Time fo' las' wot you wuz heah, Calhoun, Ah missed a watah bucket, and de las' time de bridle wuz gone, and now as Ah has use fo' de saddle, Ah'd ruther yo' wouldn' come roun' no mo'.

"'Ah don't say yo' hain't honest, fo' Ah b'lieves yo' is, but sich cu'is things happens while yo's in de neighborhood, so, jes' ter please an ole man, wot ain' enj'yin' de best er health, please don' come round dis house no mo'.'"

❦

His Question.

"I visited President Lincoln one day," said General Wilson, "with my brother-in-law."

"A few days later I visited the President again with my brother-in-law, Senator Dixon of Connecticut, and a constituent of his who was six feet ten inches tall. Well, we met, and for the first and perhaps the only time in his life, the President was flabbergasted by the sight of a man looking down on him by six inches

"Finally his face was overspread by that lovely smile of his, and he said: 'My friend, will you permit me to ask you a question?'

"'Why, certainly, Mr. President,' the man answered.

"'I want to know,' said Mr. Lincoln, 'if you can tell when your feet get cold.'"

❦

He Missed Her.

Bill Dighton, an old war veteran, who resides in a little Rhode Island town, was celebrating the event of his second wedding day.

"Neighbors," he said to those who had witnessed the simple ceremony, "you all know that this good woman that has consented to marry me is something of a stranger in our town. Now I, being only a man, feel kind of insufficient to make her acquainted with everybody as quickly as I'd like to. So I'm goin' to depend on you women folks," he added, with a confiding smile at the members of the gentler sex present, "to make her feel at home among us, just as my first wife would if she was here today. I miss her considerable at all times, but more'n usual on an occasion like this."

❦

The Canny Scot.

An uneducated Scotchman made a fortune. One day he and an acquaintance were talking, when the latter said to old Duncan:

"Say, Duncan, you don't know enough to go in when it rains. Why, you can't even spell 'bird.'"

"B-u-r-d," said Duncan.

"I tell you, you don't know anything. Why, if you had to spell to make a living you'd have been dead some years ago. I'll bet you a hundred you can't spell 'bird.'"

"I'll tak' ye," quickly replied Duncan.

After the money was put up, Duncan said, "B-i-r-d."

"That ain't the way you spelled it the first time."

"I wasna bettin' then."

❦

Trusting in Providence.

Captain Foretopp tells a story of a certain noted divine who was on his steamer when a great gale overtook them off the Oregon coast.

"It looks pretty bad," said the bishop to the captain.

"Couldn't be much worse, Bishop," replied Foretopp.

Half an hour later the steamer was diving under the waves as if she were a submarine, and leaking like an old door.

"Looks worse, I think, Captain," said the bishop.

"We must trust in Providence now, Bishop," answered Foretopp.

"Oh, I hope it has not come to that," gasped the bishop.

❦

The Blame Lay Elsewhere.

Mr. Hoyle was a most indulgent father, but of late he had commenced to think his son Arthur was taking advantage of his generosity.

"Why, when I was your age, young man," he said one morning, after a particularly urgent demand for more funds, "I didn't have as much money to spend in a month as you spend in a day."

"Well, dad, don't scold me about it," said the youth. "Why don't you go after grandfather?"

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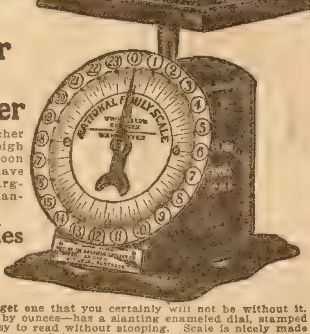

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The Enchanted Chopstick

(Continued from page three.)

of the Royal Hunters, himself somewhat of a taxidermist.

But that was exactly what happened. The hunter sent an arrow squarely through the huge bird, and straightway set about stuffing him. He decided that the chopstick attached to the bird's leg would be just the thing to mount him on, so perched on the chopstick natural as life was he mounted.

"Entirely too fine for my collection," said the hunter to himself, so he saddled his horse and rode away with it to the castle to present it to the King.

The King was absent, but the hunter left the bird with a servant, an awkward lout of a fellow. The latter started to put the gift in the throneroom, but in passing the foot of the throne his foot slipped, and he all but sprawled over the little Prince, who lay playing by the Royal Footstool.

He caught himself in time, but the jar shook the bit of wood from the eagle's claws into the tiny outstretched palm of the little Prince, and there it was when the astonished King returned a few hours later.

Paddy Whalen will tell you of a dozen plans which the King devised to rid his heir of the obnoxious chopstick, plans cleverly conceived and cleverly executed, but plans which nevertheless came straightway to naught.

Did he send the chopstick forth from the kingdom by way of the Air, it came back by way of the Water. Did he send it out by way of the Water it came back by way of the Land. All the hidden forces of Nature seemed to act together with the one object to get that chopstick back to the Royal Castle with the least possible delay.

The King wasted away to a shadow of himself with worry, and went about rolling his fingers and talking to himself and looking with dread to see from what direction the baneful chopstick would make its return.

Once or twice he succeeded in keeping it away long enough to prove that the Prince improved with its absence, and that it was really responsible for his unfortunate condition. After crying for a day over its absence, he would perk up and would begin to learn so fast and grow so fast that you could almost see him do it.

Alas! With the return of the chopstick the little Diarmid would relapse into his apathy and sit and slobber over it by the hour in a way that was pitiful to see.

Things had gone on this way for a year. The Prince was six years old. Yet you would never have thought of his being over two by his actions.

And then the thought came to the King: Perhaps the mind that was clever enough to ferret out the source of the trouble might be clever enough to solve the other and bigger problem of how to lose the chopstick. He inquired for the student. He had left the college, and set up for himself in another part of the town, but of course the nursemaid knew where he could be found.

The King told him of all the clever devices he had vainly used in the matter of the chopstick.

"For Heaven's sake, is there nothing can be done?" he asked.

When the young man left the castle he carried the stick in his hip pocket. "If it comes back let me know, at once," he said in parting. "I consider my plan certain, but it may require several trials."

Sure enough, in a couple of days the chopstick turned up, and the young man was sent for.

The second time it was gone for a week and the King began to feel his spirits rise.

The third time it was gone for a month.

"We're getting the best of it," said the medico. "It's only a question of time till we wear them out.

The King watched the days slip by on the fourth trial. Week was added to week, and still no chopstick. Two months, three months passed slowly by, then the young man was sent for.

"I guess we've lost it this time," said the King.

The little Prince was running happily about the grounds. The missing years had been added to him as miraculously as they had been withheld. He had achieved as much growth during the three months as the six years would have given him.

"Yes, you can safely say the thing is gone, and gone for good," said the benefactor.

"And I am anxious to reward you," said the King, "and curious to know the method you used."

"If you will but recommend my skill to the fat and ailing dowagers of the court, I will reward myself amply from their pocketbooks," said the physician, "and as for the method used, I have a little brother in the public schools."

"Yes," said the King. "But what might your little brother in the public schools have to do with it."

"He is learning to figure, and hence has to have pencils," said the medico.

"Yes," said the King. "Proceed."

"I split the chopstick open, and with a bit of lead and a spoonful of glue transformed it into a pencil," said the physician. "Then I gave it to said little brother, and I knew the thing was as good as gone, for there is no power of sorcery, whether it be of the heavens above, or of the waters upon the face of the earth, or of the caverns beneath the surface of the earth which can keep track of the pencils of a schoolboy. They soon give up trying."

"After that," as Paddy Whalen will tell you, "the troubles of the Prince Diarmid were at an end.

* * *

His Retraction.

The old negro preacher was exhorting his congregation to repent of their sins, and by way of stirring them up he shouted: "Ah sees befo' me in dis heah tabe'nacle no less dan twelve chicken thieves, includin' dat low-down trifler, Zeke Taylor."

Zeke Taylor promptly got up and left the church. He was very angry, and after services he told the preacher he should make some retraction. The preacher listened, concluded he had been in the wrong, and promised to do so.

Accordingly, the next Sunday he rose in his pulpit and said:

"Bretheren, las' Sunday Ah tol' you-all dat Ah saw befo' me twelve chicken thieves, includin' Zeke Taylor. Ah fin' Ah was mistooken and Ah desires to make retraction. What Ah oughter said, bretheren, was dat Ah saw befo' me twelve chicken thieves, not includin' Zeke Taylor."

* * *

Nothing Serious.

Clarence H. Mackay, apropos of an international marriage of the purely mercenary sort, said:

"This reminds me of a Duluth girl who wedded a marquis.

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Prisoners of Tecumseh

Or, The Boys of Old Fort Meigs

By Captain Jack Judson

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CHAPTER I.

PRISONERS.

IT WAS night when two frontier boys, Ralph Austin and Paul Norman, stole out of Fort Meigs, on the banks of the Maumee, and headed for the surrounding timber, a night in the spring of the year 1813.

They knew that large numbers of British and Indians were in the neighborhood, for the great Tecumseh and General Proctor had swooped down upon the fort which was defended by General Harrison with a party of gallant Americans who were determined to resist to the last.

"We must be very cautious," said Ralph, in low tones, "for Tecumseh is not far away, and he is the lurking panther of these woods."

"And if we fall into his hands it will go pretty rough with us," was the response. "For one, I don't care to make the Shawnee's acquaintance."

"Neither do I, Paul."

A golden crescent hung in the sky, littering the ground with spots of light, and the early spring flowers, so abundant in the woods, were sleeping in the gentle beams.

The boys were armed with trusty rifles, which they knew how to use, for they had been brought up on the wild frontier and, moreover, had many a good score of game to their credit.

"There's one target I would like to get a shot at," pursued Ralph, "and that is the Prophet, Tecumseh's one-eyed brother, the man who keeps the redmen inflamed against the whites."

"I fear we won't get the chance," Paul smiled back. "That red rascal isn't going to place his skin in jeopardy, but he keeps in the background singing his outlandish songs till the Indians are rendered furious."

At that moment Ralph halted and laid his hand warningly upon his companion's arm.

"What what that, Paul?" he whispered.

Paul cocked his rifle, subduing the click as much as possible, and leaned forward.

"A deer or a catamount, perhaps," he sent back over his shoulder. "I did hear a noise, but——"

"Heavens! Look ahead!"

Ralph with bated breath was pointing forward toward a patch of moonlight.

"I see! An Indian!"

Instantly the two young borderers dropped to the ground, nestling close together while they stared at the object that had caught Ralph's roving eye.

On a log stood an Indian, grotesque in appearance, his whole figure plainly discernible. That he was not a warrior was to be seen. His headdress was different from any in the forest. It consisted of six feathers, two of which were broken, and the boys knew from this that the wearer was none other than Elsktawawa, the Shanwee Prophet, and the very personage whose name had just passed Ralph's lips.

"What a fine target," said Paul, fingering his weapon.

"Why, he isn't twenty rods away," responded Ralph. "There's a scalp that would make the whole border rejoice.

"But why not take the old demon alive?" Paul suggested.

"The very thing!"

The Prophet was wholly oblivious of the presence of the two boys, for he was going through a lot of incantations preliminary to showing himself to his people the next day.

Eager to capture this scourge of the frontier, Ralph and Paul began to crawl forward, never for a moment taking their eyes from their prey. The capture of the Prophet would be a great victory, for his influence was boundless among the savages, and with him in his hands, Harrison would be able to deal with Tecumseh

Nearer and nearer to the Indian came the determined youths. The ground favored them. Inch by inch they approached. Theirs was the noiseless crawl of the snake, and all the time the Prophet's war song increased in volume till it seemed to fill the whole forest.

"Now!" whispered Ralph. "When I click my tongue charge straight at the foe."

"I'm ready."

The following moment Ralph sounded the signal, and the boys darted forward. The Prophet was taken unawares Before he knew of the boys' presence they were upon him, and he was struggling in their strenuous arms.

He was a giant in both stature and strength. His long arms were powerful, and his snarling teeth soon told the captors that they had their hands full All three rolled from the log in the desperate battle for the mastery, the boys holding on for dear life, and the slippery Indian striving to loosen the terrible grip.

"We've got him, Ralph!" exclaimed Paul. "Don't let him slip through your fingers."

"Hold your own and I will do the same."

The victory was not accomplished yet. Finding himself in peril, the Prophet let out a shrill cry and then glared at his young captors

"Back to the fort with him!" exclaimed Ralph. "We mustn't let the red demons outwit us."

The Shawnee planted his feet firmly on the ground and refused to move. Ralph placed the muzzle of his rifle against the captive's head and commanded him to go forward A grim look was all he received in reply.

"We've got to get him to the fort," said Paul. "If he won't walk we'll drag him there."

But this promised to be as difficult a matter as forcing the Indian to walk.

All at once the forest seemed to quiver with cries, and there was a rush of shadowy forms. The boys looked at each other in dire alarm.

"The redskins!" gasped Paul.

Painted figures came nearer by leaps and bounds. The boys drew back.

"Knock the old fellow on the head," cried Ralph.

Paul lifted his weapon for that purpose, but the next instant it was wrenched from his grasp and he was struggling in the clutches of a stalwart Shawnee. Ralph had been seized at the same time, and resistance was useless. The young borderers were captives.

"This is a pretty pair of fish," grinned Paul, looking at his companion. "I guess we're in for the stake now."

"Don't let them see you tremble, Paul. We took the risk and lost, so keep a stiff upper lip, no matter what comes."

The Prophet was overjoyed with his rescue. He glared at the boys like a jungle tiger, and flung his long arms into their faces.

In a few moments the youths were being conducted through the forest at a run. They were goaded forward by a pack of yelling redskins, who took delight in prodding them with their hunting knives, and now and then striking their backs with their fists.

Not long after their capture they found themselves in the Indian camp. Their coming had been heralded by yells which excited the warriors, and Ralph and Paul had an unusual sight for their pains.

Indians were everywhere, all in their hideous war paint and all eager to get a look at the white boys.

"Where boys from?" suddenly demanded a handsome chief, who came forward as the hooting crowd made way for him.

The young captives turned and at once knew that they confronted the famous Tecumseh, the leader of all the savages on the border. He was dressed in half-civilized costume, for he had been made a general in the British army, and was of commanding presence.

His very look blanched the young prisoners' cheeks.

"Where white boys from?" insisted Tecumseh, halting in front of the pair.

Ralph made bold to reply.

"We are from the fort," said he, meeting Tecumseh's gaze.

"Spies!"

"We are not spies, but scouts," was the answer. "We were not captured within your lines."

Tecumseh was silent for a moment.

"The big white chief wants to see the young Americans," he said, at length.

"That means Proctor himself," whispered Ralph.

Tecumseh waved his hand, and the boys were seized again.

"Just let them give me a chance, and they won't hold me long," Paul chuckled to himself. "I guess I haven't lost the use of my legs."

But he was given no opportunity to make use of his sprinting qualities, for both he and Ralph were surrounded by a cordon of armed, half-naked warriors and escorted away.

General Proctor was seated in his tent on a little knoll, when he was suddenly startled by the appearance of Tecumseh, who strode forward with a look of triumph in the depths of his dark eyes.

"Prisoners from the enemy," he said, as he waved his hand toward the boys, who were pushed forward. "Braves capture them in the forest. They had caught the Prophet napping," and here a grin suffused the speaker's face.

Proctor looked up with a frown. He studied the young prisoners from head to foot before he spoke.

"So they caught you, my young rabbits!" he said. "Now give me a bit of news. How many men has General Harrison at the fort?"

Ralph and Paul exchanged rapid glances.

"We are your prisoners, General Proctor," Ralph replied, "but we don't betray General Harrison. But this I will say: He has men enough at the fort to keep you out."

"Ho! what insolence!" flashed the British General. "You are not my prisoners, but Tecumseh's, and I guess you know what that means."

CHAPTER II.

THE AMULET.

RALPH and Paul had good reason to tremble at the situation. While Tecumseh was known at times to have been lenient with his captives the boys feared the vengeance of the Prophet, whom they had almost taken into the fort.

This red fiend, who wore a necklace of human skulls, had never harbored a single trait of mercy. He had a reputation for fiendishness that had spread far, and more than one desolated home stood as a monument to his cruelty.

"Well," remarked Paul, when they had been conducted from Proctor's presence, "we are surely in a pickle. There's no telling what will happen now,"

"Come what may, we must keep up our courage," replied Ralph. "At any rate, we will get to see the inside workings of the enemy, and to this end we must keep our eyes open."

"Trust me for that, Ralph."

When the young captives had reached Tecumseh's camp they were thrust into a log hut which had once been the abode of a settler, and a guard of Indians was placed about it. By looking through the crevices of the hut they could see the painted warriors, bands of which were constantly arriving, for Tecumseh had called them to the warpath, and hopes of taking Fort Meigs were strong in every breast.

All through the day this went on, and when night once more swung her sable curtain over the landscape the scene suddenly grew more animated. Fires were lighted everywhere, and Indians

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Not until the fires died down did the wild scenes become quiet.

"I don't like this stillness," said Ralph, shaking his head. "It bodes evil."

At that moment the boom of a cannon was heard on the river, and a jet of flame told the captives that the gun had been fired from one of Proctor's gunboats upon which the British had come up the Maumee. The fire was answered from the fort, and then all was still again.

"What was that?" suddenly exclaimed Paul, clutching his companion's arm. "Some one is fingering with the lock on the old door."

"The guard, perhaps."

"I don't see why a guard would do that."

"But some one is at the lock. There it goes again!"

At that moment the noise was repeated, and then to the boys' surprise, a puff of air struck their faces. They drew back with a start.

"Boys in there?" said a voice, in good English.

"To be sure we are," answered Ralph, with misgivings.

"Don't get flustered," said the unknown voice. "I'm not the redskin that I look. I'm old Set Trigger."

"What! you——"

"There, keep a still tongue in your noggin, I say. They've taken me for a genuine Shawnee, but I'm old Set just the same."

Ralph dropped his voice to a low whisper.

"In the name of Heaven," said he, "how did you get here?"

"That's my secret, not to be divulged at this identical moment," was the answer. "It takes more than an Injun to beat old Set when he has the proper cards up his sleeve. I've been watchin' that one-eyed Prophet for the last hour, and he's up to mischief."

"I don't doubt it."

"He's been whisperin' to the reds off and on, and castin' mad eyes at this shanty. Now I'll shut the door."

He drew back and closed the door in the boys' faces.

"What do you think of that, Paul?" cried Ralph. "Think of the old borderer playing Indian right in the jaws of death."

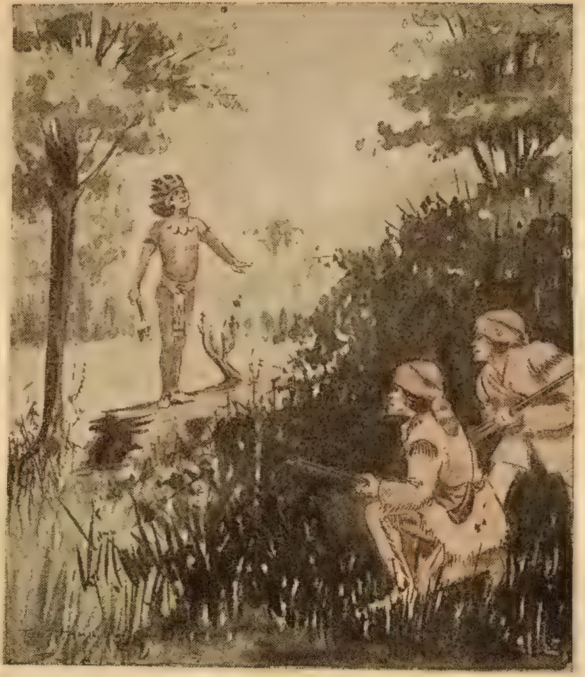
"He's liable to do anything from what I've heard of the old fellow.'

"And he makes a fine Shawnee, too."

An hour of perplexing stillness passed. The moon went down and darkness took her place.

"How'd you like to trade places with one o' the enemy?" said a low voice at the door.

"We'll gladly trade," responded Ralph. "And you won't ask any boot, eh?"



"Take the old demon alive!" suggested Paul.

"We won't think of it."

"Then it's a go," said the voice. "Just lie low for a spell."

This the boys were ready to do, and presently the lock was manipulated once more.

"Here we are," said the unmistakable voice of Set Trigger, as the door opened. "Now go inside and keep mum," and something was thrust across the threshold.

"Come out, boys."

Ralph and Paul sprang forward and halted before the angular form of the old frontiersman.

"What have you done?" eagerly inquired Ralph. "Whom did you throw into the cabin?"

"Nobody but the Prophet."

"What, that oily old rascal?"

"Yes."

"Did you catch him napping?"

"Not much. I caught him at work. He came sneakin' round the hut, and I just took him in. I've fixed him all right. He can't let out a single screech. I've stuffed the end of my huntin' jacket into his mouth and his hands are tied on his back. It was a tussle, I tell ye, but it takes a real redskin to get the best of old Set."

"We owe you a thousand thanks."

"Don't holler till you're out o' the woods," admonished Set Trigger, "and we're not out yet."

"We'll suppress our joy, Set."

"Now we've got to pass through the hull Injun camp, and it is ticklish business. These red wolves sleep with one eye open, like a weasel, and they kin hear a cricket walk."

For some moments the three stood silent in the midst of danger, when the old man went on:

"Foller me. If we don't git out, it won't be my fault."

The whole savage camp lay before them. It was quite dark, with the exception of smoldering fires which threw a ghastly glare around. In this weird light were to be seen the forms of sleeping Indians, all with weapons within easy grasp, and the boys did not have to be cautioned to move without noise.

All at once the old Indian hater paused.

"I've got to go back," said he. "I've lost my amulet."

"Where?"

"It's in the cabin where the Prophet is."

"Let it go."

"I kain't. If I lose it, somethin' will happen. I've got to have it before we kin move on. That amulet was given to me long ago by Star Eyes, a Delaware girl, and she said that when I lost it all luck would desert me. Wait here for me, boys."

The young borderers saw the figure of old Set glide away, and it was soon lost to sight.

"The superstitious old fellow!" smiled Ralph. "For the recovery of the trinket he would place us in danger."

The sound of old Set's footsteps had already died away, and the boys had nothing to do but wait. They dared not stir a step. As they dropped to the ground they held their breath and tried to make out their surroundings.

Would the old man never come back?

"I'm minded to make a run for freedom," suddenly whispered Paul. "Every moment here increases our peril."

"But wait a few minutes longer," advised Ralph.

At that moment one of the sleeping Indians rose to his feet and stood like a giant in the light of a campfire. The boys could almost touch him with their hands, and their alarm grew while they watched him.

Suddenly a yell that seemed to shake the whole forest sounded like the tocsin of doom. It came from the direction of the cabin, and the next moment the entire camp seemed to be roused.

"Something's happened to old Set!" ejaculated Paul Norman.

Every Indian seemed to be on his feet. The boys hugged the ground all the closer, hoping that the scant shrubbery would screen them from observation.

"Here they come," cried Ralph. "Look yonder, Paul."

Paul was already looking, and the sight he beheld seemed to freeze the very blood in his veins. In the glare of a torch which one of the savages had snatched from a campfire, they saw old Set in the hands of half a dozen Indians, while the Prophet was dancing before him in fiendish glee. The tables had been turned on the old man.

"Confound his amulet!" grated Paul. "It's going to be our undoing after all. Let's run for it."

But Ralph pulled Paul down beside him, and they surveyed the scene in undisguised horror.

"There's a white man with the Indians!" Ralph suddenly exclaimed.

"It is Simon Girty, the scourge of the frontier," was the reply.

"Now, indeed, we are lost!"

"What has become of the young white spies?" demanded Girty, shaking his fists in old Set Trigger's face. "You've played Indian once too often. Now we'll show you that we never forget."

"Well, I don't fear you, you white-livered dog!" cried the old man, in answer to the threat. "The boys are back in the fort by this time. I got them out all right."

"I don't believe it," screeched Girty. "Search the camp!" and a dozen torches lit up the scene, while the horrified boys wished the earth might open and swallow them.

CHAPTER III.

TECUMSEH TO THE RESCUE.

THE flashing of forest torches and the wild shouts of the savages as they gathered about the cool old ranger enchained the attention of the two boys. They were liable to be discovered at any moment, and thus disprove Set Trigger's declaration that they were far from the camp and on their way back to the fort.

The Prophet had joined Girty in his denunciation of the prisoner, and it was evident that his days were numbered.

"What made you play Indian?" demanded the white renegade.

"Just for luck," grinned the old man, nothing daunted by Girty's savage mien.

"We'll have a roast before morning," was the brutal reply. "We've been looking for you these many days, and——"

"Wal, since ye've found me what do you think of my looks?" irritated Set Trigger. "I'm not the purtiest sight just now, dressed in Injun toggery. The sooner I get this dress off the better, eh?"

The words only infuriated the savages the more, and the old man was struck several times in the face by his foes.

All at once he leaped forward like a panther, and his bony fist landed squarely in Girty's face, sending that fiend sprawling on the ground. There was an immediate closing in on the borderer, but he jerked a rifle from the hands of one of the Shawnees, and, laying it about him right and left, soon cleared a path.

In another instant he was bounding away like a deer, with an hundred painted demons in hot pursuit.

"That's a good trick!" ejaculated Ralph, half under his breath. "I never saw anything like it"

Despite his years, Set Trigger was as nimble as a boy, and he cleared logs and other obstacles like an athlete.

"Now's our chance," said Paul, half rising to his feet. "There isn't a redskin in sight and——"

"Straight ahead," interrupted Ralph. "Make your legs work as they never worked before."

It was the work of a moment to send the boys several rods from the spot where they had crouched, and they were bounding away, trying to get beyond the campfires before they were discovered.

The yells that came back to them through the forest told them that Set Trigger was still making good use of his limbs, and they knew that if he reached the river safely he might distance his pursuers and eventually reach the fort. It was an exciting race for life.

"I guess we'll make it," cried Ralph. "Old Set Trigger has thrown the Indians off their guard, and they think only of catching him."

"Make for the river," Paul replied, turning suddenly. "The water will screen us."

The rippling Maumee was not far off.

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and the boys bent every energy for it.

"Down!" abruptly cried Ralph, at the same time pulling Paul to the ground.

"What makes white boys run so?" demanded a stern voice. "They have the feet of young deer."

A figure seemed to have risen from the ground before them.

"Who let white boys out?" said the same voice, and lo! Ralph and Paul were staring with bated breath into the face of the great Tecumseh.

The chief of the Shawnees was standing with folded arms, looking down at them and secretly enjoying their fears.

"Have I traitors in my tribe?" he asked, coming nearer.

Ralph rose and replied:

"You had no traitors. A white man played Indian and set us free."

"What white man?"

"They call him Set Trigger."

A flash leaped up in Tecumseh's eyes.

"My old enemy," he said harshly. "If Tecumseh had known——"

He checked himself and did not continue.

"Boys go back," said the chief, and his voice was not so stern as before.

"It means that we will be sacrificed to the madness of the Prophet."

"Is not Tecumseh greater than his brother?" was the lofty answer. "Who shall stand between me and my captives?"

There was nothing to do but submit, and chagrined, the two boys were conducted toward their old prison.

There was something lofty in this great savage who had no superior among his people, and as his mien had softened, the captives took hope and marched before him.

In a little while the Indians who had pursued Set Trigger came drifting back. They were crestfallen, for the quarry had escaped, and one by one they reached the camp, boiling with rage and furious over their bootless chase.

Tecumseh awaited them in the light of a fire, Ralph and Paul beside him.

At sight of the boys the fury of the savages broke out anew. Tomahawks were brandished around them, clinched hands were thrust into their faces, and they drew back, looking at the immobile Tecumseh, who did not quail an inch.

Presently Girty and the Prophet joined the mob.

"He got away!" cried the renegade. "The old white hound was as nimble as a deer."

"He choked the Prophet and threw him into the prison lodge," growled Elsktawawa, shaking his hatchet. "I will have the blood of the young captives."

"To the stake with them!" rose on every side. "Let the fire devour the enemies of the King."

Not until then did Tecumseh move. He stepped in front of the terrified boys and threw up his tomahawk.

"The Indian who touches the white boys dies like a mangy dog!" he roared, his blood aflame. "Tecumseh is chief of the mingled nations. Stand back and let him deal with his prisoners."

Just then some one pushed the Prophet forward, and he came within reach of his brother's arm. Tecumseh caught him by the shoulders, and spinning him round like a top, sent him twenty feet away, where he fell in a heap on the ground.

This act awed the yelling fiends, and the following moment the great Shawnee swept his tomahawk so close to Girty's face that that pale-faced villain recoiled as if the weapon had cut his skin.

"Now go back to your rest," commanded Tecumseh, waving his hand to the silent Indians. "The white boys belong to your chief."

It was enough. The mien of Tecumseh was enough to awe the human wolves, and before they could recover, the chief and his prisoners were gone.

The Indians were not disposed to be cheated out of their vengeance; they gathered in groups and debated how to get possession of the young captives. The Prophet was constantly egging them on, for his fury was by no means abated, and he went hither and thither with his schemes.

Ralph and Paul, not yet out of danger, lay amid the darkness of the old cabin with every sense on the alert. They had given their pledge to Tecumseh that they would not attempt to escape that night, but they almost regretted their promise when they discovered that the cabin was not guarded.

"I'm glad Set Trigger got away," said Ralph. "He did the best he could for us, and if he had not gone back for his amulet we might have got away."

"I hope he got his trinket," responded Paul. "Anyhow, his luck was with him."

"We will know later on if good fortune favors us."

It was almost morning when the sleepless youths heard a scratching sound on the roof of the cabin. They held their breath and waited.

"It is not an animal," said Paul in a whisper. "Some one is up yonder."

"Can old Set Trigger have ventured back?"

"I hardly think he has."

The strange sound continued, and at last the boys saw the stars through a hole in the roof. All at once something dropped at their feet, and then another similar noise was heard, as they drew together in the gloom.

"The redskins have come for us," whispered Ralph.

"Then let it be a battle to the finish."

Something brushed Ralph's arm. With the quicknes of a cat the youth threw out both hands, and they came in contact with a human throat. Of course, they tightened there.

The boy and his antagonist went to the ground, and at the same time Paul was struggling with an unseen adversary. Over and over rolled the combatants, and Ralph, keeping his first hold, pounded his enemy's head on the hard soil till he felt his efforts slacken.

"I've silenced my foe," he gasped, breaking loose from a pair of arms.

"But there are more on the roof!" cried Paul.

Ralph sprang up and wrenched at the door. It gave way at length, and he threw it open.

"Help! Help!" he shouted, hoping his voice would reach Tecumseh.

Slumbering warriors sprang to their feet. Paul leaped from the cabin and pulled the door to.

"Fire for the white boys! Fire! fire!" rang out the voices of the savages.

A stalwart Indian came from somewhere and threw himself in front of the young captives. Simultaneously Ralph and Paul uttered cries of joy. Once more Tecumseh had come to their rescue!

This remarkable story leads to very extraordinary situations and dramatic episodes. The reader will find it eminently worth reading to the end. Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of it. The surest way to get the Ledger is to subscribe for it and have it come to your home regularly. Today is a good time to attend to this.

* * *

HE WENT FISHING.

"How many bass did you catch?" asked Mrs. Simpkins, sleepily watching Simpkins unpack a suitcase. "And did you put them in the top of the icebox—right on the ice—before you came upstairs?"

"My dear," answered Simpkins, "I've always told you that you have a most unfortunate faculty of jumping to conclusions. Now, who said I had bass to put anywhere?"

"You don't mean to say you came home without any, after all the talk there's been with the Browns and Potters about a bass dinner? Why, I practically have that dinner planned for tomorrow night, and——"

"That's another thing you should put a curb on," Simpkins interrupted calmly, "this habit of taking things for granted."

"Goodness me! How could I help taking bass dinner for granted? Haven't you for weeks, every time the Browns and Potters put their feet inside our door, told us about this trip to Tippett's place when the fishing season should open? Haven't you talked dinner until—why, when Mr. Brown passed this morning, he said he'd been tasting black bass ever since your departure on Monday. And Mr. Potter——"

"Hang Potter!" exclaimed Simpkins, his placidity vanishing. "Now see here, cut out this—this rubbing it in."

"Oh—then, really you didn't catch anything? Not a solitary bass?"

"Not a solitary bass," acidly.

"Not with all that new truck—I mean, the new tackle—you bought?"

Simpkins closed the emptied suit case savagely. "I suppose you might as well know at once—I didn't fish!"

"Didn't fish," gasped Mrs. Simpkins. "Well, what did you do for two days and a half?"

"Worked," tersely. Before the frown of perplexity which ridged Mrs. Simkins' brows found expression, Simpkins continued in a tone not the most comfortable in the world. "You see, this was Tippett's first visit to his place this spring——"

"Oh," breathed Mrs. Simpkins.

"So when we landed," went on Simpkins, "we had to take down storm doors and windows and put them up in the attic, haul the boat from the back of the lot and put it in the water, get mattresses and bedding out in the sun, and Tippett's wife had told him to be sure and sweep and mop the cottage, and—well, we had a breathing spell after lunch, and I suggested fishing. But Tippett thought the boat wouldn't be water tight until morning. He said he had the bathhouse to paint some time during the summer, that it might be a good plan while we waited to try out color. Said he knew I had a great eye for color! Well, he got out the paints, and, as he had brought two new brushes along also, of course I had to offer to lend a hand. The job took us until sundown. Tippett examined the boat then, and gave it as his opinion that it would be all right in the morning. When we retired, he suggested that we get up real early and begin raking off dead leaves. It would give us a genuine old-fashioned appetite, and send us back to the days of our boyhood. Now, what are you grinning at? Yes, we were up at sunup! You know very well I couldn't get out of it!"

"Sunup—really!" Two red spots appeared on Mrs. Simpkins' cheek. "Oho!"

"Hang it! A fellow can't grouch when he's visiting, can he? Well, we worked all morning because the boat was still leaking, Tippett said, and all afternoon and then some. So——"

"So," cut in Mrs. Simpkins ruthlessly, "easy Billy again arose at sunup, and worked like a horse until train time."

"But it looked great when he had finished," interrupted Simpkins in sudden elation. "We got the pier out, too! Tippett said——"

"The boat was still sloppy, I suppose."

"My dear, you talk as though you think my friend Tippett really intended——"

"Oh, no; I don't—think! Go on."

"That's all, except Tippett said we'd have to begin all over again with our looking forward to our fishing trip. Really, until you began harping that bass dinner, I'd forgotten my disappointment, because—honest, I feel years younger after working in the open! This getting up early in the morning isn't much of a stunt when you——"

"Indeed," interrupted Mrs. Simpkins. "Glad you feel that way—at last. Hand me the alarm clock, please. We'll just have the process of rejuvenation continue, Billy dear, until my flowerbeds and the vegetable garden are in shape for seeding. I've asked you to dig them up only about forty-eleven times."

* * *

A Thrifty Genius.

There is a certain famous violinist who frequently visits this country, and who, among his acquaintances, is almost as noted for his parsimony as for his genius. Among this musician's admirers was a young woman who was determined, if possible, to procure some souvenir of the great man. Her opportunity came one rainy day when she chanced to encounter the musician on Broadway. He was provided with an old cotton umbrella, green with age; while the young woman carried a nice new silk one.

She stopped him for a moment, exclaiming:

"Oh, if you would only give me some slight remembrance of yourself—no matter how small!"

The great man surveyed her keenly, and then gave a glance at the old cotton umbrella, that covered him. This he thrust into her hands, saying:

"Certainly, my dear young lady. I shall be delighted. We will exchange umbrellas."

* * *

Great Odds.

Walter McQueen, a person of color, faced Justice Howard in the Police Court at Jackson, Tenn., the charge against him being assault and battery on the person of Lily Belle Hopper. In addition to the battered complainant, three of her friends appeared as witnesses against him.

The clerk read the warrant, beginning: "City of Jackson, Tennessee, against Walter McQueen"—and so on. The prisoner scratched his head, meantime contemplating the glowering faces of the chief witnesses for the prosecution.

"Please, suh, read dat fust part over agin to me," he requested.

"'City of Jackson, Tennessee, against Walter McQueen,'" obliged the clerk.

"Well, Jedge," said Walter, "ef de whole city of Jackson an' dese foah cullid ladies is organized ag'inst one nigger, what chance has he got? I's guilty!"

* * *

Liars.

She found her dearest girl chum in tears.

The situation was unexpected, being rather common and vulgar. But the patrician girl was sympathetic enough to inquire, just as any other girl might.

"Why, dear, what on earth is the matter?"

"Men are all liars!" sobbed the broken-hearted one.

"Oh, don't say that!" protested the other. "That's too broad a generalization."

"Well, I suppose there are some good, honest fellows who are not. But all the really nice men are!"

* * *

A Rainy Day.

A prudent man advised his drunken servant to put by his money for a rainy day. In a few weeks the master inquired how much of his wages he had saved.

"Faith, none at all," said he, "it rained yesterday and it all went."

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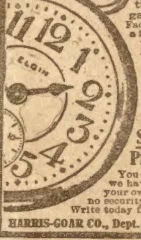

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THE BUSINESS BEE.

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From lily to rose
And idles about in the clover.

But he truly is busy all day,
And is not such a vagabond fellow!
You may call it just play,
But he's working away,
To pay for his coat brown and yellow.

Though the secret you never might guess,
Yet this roving and sipping of honey
Means business; oh, yes,
For it means nothing less
Than a bee's way of making his money!

GINGERBREAD.

A long, long time ago there dwelt a bent old man and a bent old woman in a queer little twisted old house. They hadn't any little boys or any little girls, and the house was so quiet and lonesome that at last the little bent old woman decided that she'd just set to work and make a little boy out of gingerbread! She did, too; she made him a snug little jacket of golden brown chocolate, and she put nice little round seeds in it for buttons, and she put two big black, shiny currants in his head for eyes, so he could see well, and she mixed up some nice red icing and made her boy a nice little mouth of that, and she fixed a nice little cap of red icing on his head. The little bent old woman was careful to get him perfect. She rolled him all out and molded him well and put him in a pan and baked him nice and brown.

"Now," thought she, "I'll have a child of my own."

When the little bent old woman thought it was time for the gingerbread boy to be done, she opened the big oven door and pulled the pan forward. Out jumped the gingerbread boy and scampered over the kitchen floor and out of the open door and down the steps and through the streets. When the little bent old woman and the little bent old man recovered their breaths, they just chased after him as fast as ever their bent old legs would carry them. But the boy just laughed and they simply couldn't catch him!

On, on, on ran the gingerbread boy, and by and by he came to an old bossy cow eating grass by the roadway.

"Halt, little gingerbread boy!" said the bossy cow. "Just come here and let me eat you."

But the gingerbread boy just laughed and sang:

"I've run away from a bent old woman
and a bent old man.
I can run away from you, I can!"

This made the old bossy cow as mad as could be, and she chased after the gingerbread boy as fast as ever she could go; but he only laughed back at her and sang:

"Run, run, just as fast as you can!
You'll never catch me; I'm the gingerbread man!"

And in spite of all the poor bossy cow could do she couldn't catch him.

On and on ran the gingerbread boy, and by and by he came to a horse munching grass in a pasture.

"You'd better stop here, gingerbread boy," said the horse. "You look pretty good to me!" But the funny little gingerbread boy laughed. "Haw, haw, haw!" and said:

"I've run away from a bent old woman,
a bent old man,
And a cow;
I can run away from you, I can!"

Of course, this put the horse on his mettle, and he chased the gingerbread boy with all the speed he could muster. But the gingerbread boy ran twenty times faster and looked over his brown shoulder and sang:

"Run, run, as fast as you can!
You'll never catch me! I'm the gingerbread man!"

And sure enough, the horse couldn't catch him.

On and on and on ran the gingerbread boy till he came to a barn full of threshers. Now, threshers have good noses for smelling and perfectly enormous appetites, as any farmer's wife in all the land could tell you; and so when they caught a whiff of the odor of the fresh-baked gingerbread and saw the little fellow's nice brown appearance, they did their level best to pick him up. "Don't run away, gingerbread boy," they cried; "you look mighty good to eat!" But the gingerbread boy laughed, "Oho, Oho!" and sang:

"I've run away from a bent old woman,
A bent old man,
A cow,
And a horse;
I can run away from you, I can!"

And he left the threshers far behind, singing back to them:

"Run, run, as fast as you can!"
You'll never catch me; I'm the gingerbread man!"

And, sure enough, the threshers couldn't catch him.

The excitement of the thing bubbled up inside the gingerbread boy and made him run faster and faster. After he had run for miles and miles he came to a field full of mowers. When the mowers, who have quite as fine appetites as the threshers, saw the gingerbread boy they went running after him, saying:

"Just wait a bit, gingerbread boy, only a little bit! We want to eat you!" But the gingerbread boy laughed aloud and went as fast as the wind, crying:

"I've run away from a bent old woman,
A bent old man,
A cow,
A horse,
And a floor full of threshers;
I can run away from you, I can!"

And when he found he was safe, he cried back to the mowers, teasingly:

"Run, run, as fast as you can!
You'll never catch me; I'm the gingerbread man!"

And the mowers couldn't catch him.

Now, by this time the gingerbread boy began to think that nothing in all the world could catch him, and he wasn't particularly frightened when he saw a fox coming across a meadow. The old fox looked at him and began to run toward him, but the gingerbread boy called out gayly: "You can't catch me!" and when the fox ran faster so did the gingerbread boy, singing as he went:

"I've run away from a bent old woman,
A bent old man,
A cow,
A horse,
A floor full of threshers,
And a field full of mowers;
And I can run away from you, I can!
Run, run, as fast as you can!
You'll never catch me! I'm the gingerbread man!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed the fox. "What an idea! Why, my dear fellow, I wouldn't be bothered catching you if I could. Such a thought never entered my head."

Just at this time the gingerbread boy came to a river. Of course, he couldn't swim across, and he wanted to run away from the cow and the horse and all the people.

"Just jump on my tail," said Mr. Fox. "I'll take you across!" and the fox swam the river. When he was a little distance from the other side he cried: "Gingerbread boy, you had best jump on my shoulder, there's danger of your falling off there!"

So the gingerbread boy jumped obediently on his shoulder.

When they were quite close to the other side of the river the fox said: "Gingerbread boy my back aches. Jump on my nose, will you?"

So the gingerbread boy jumped on his nose.

And when the fox reached the shore—what do you think? He threw back his head suddenly and, pop! into his mouth fell the gingerbread boy!

ALL THE THINGS.

Seems when I am tucked away,
Snug and tight in bed,
All the things that ever were
Pop into my head—
How we won the snowball fight,
All our gang that day;
How we chased the Percy bunch
Till they turned at bay;
'Member how I carried home
Helen's books for her;
How she stooped to pet our cat,
Running out to purr;
How I snickered out in school
At that dummy Jones
When he told our teacher that
There were forty zones!
All the things that ever were
Pop into my head
When I'm tucked up safe and warm,
Snug and tight in bed.

Poor Mary Louise.

You have heard, have you not, of children that do not get enough to eat and are sick and unhappy in consequence? Well, that isn't the case with Mary Louise. She is only 4 years old, but she has learned to judge in an instant whether a particular person is likely to be generous and his acquaintance worth cultivating.

Mary Louise is popular, because she is as blonde as a doll and her lips smile easily. And she is always hungry. She isn't hungry like the poor children that never have much of anything to eat, but she is hungry all the same, and people like to give her things to eat because she looks so nice when she is perfectly happy. So Mary Louise has been getting about as much between meals away from home as she has at the family table.

Now, this was all right enough until a while ago. Mary Louise did not appear on the sidewalks, and people had to give their cookies to other little girls. Mary Louise was at home and she was sick. She had indigestion. She stayed at home three days, and when she came out again she had a big piece of cardboard hung around her neck by a string. On the cardboard were the words:

"Please do not give Mary Louise anything to eat. She has been sick for three days now."

And Mary Louise can't understand why people, though they are as kind and sympathetic as ever, don't give her any more things to eat between meals. You see, Mary Louise can't read.

The Difference.

A stranger, happening to notice a farmer's boy on the other side of the fence, addressed him thus:

"Young man, your corn looks kind of yellow."

"Yes, that's the kind we planted," the boy replied.

"Don't look as if you would get more than half a crop, though."

"We don't expect to. The landlord gets the other half."

This reply rather exasperated the stranger, and he said, with some asperity:

"Boy, there isn't much difference between you and a fool."

"No; only the fence," was the crushing retort.

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TRADE MARK REGISTERED
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—it answers every beverage requirement—vim, vigor, refreshment, wholesomeness.

It will satisfy you.

Demand the genuine by full name—Nicknames encourage substitution.

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ATLANTA, GA.

Whenever you see an Arrow think of Coca-Cola.

The LEDGER'S EMBROIDERY CORNER.

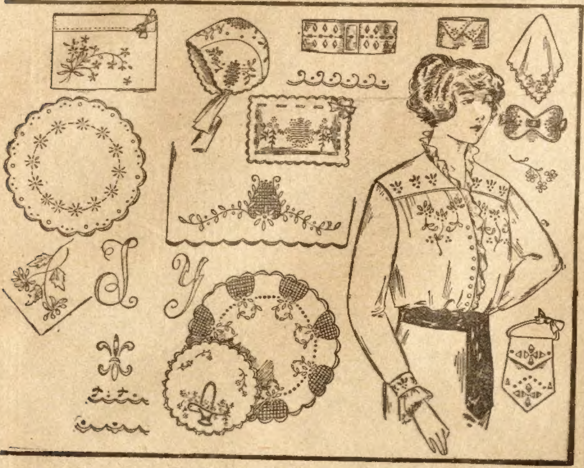
We call the attention of every woman to the beauty of the patterns displayed from week to week, and wish to impress upon each one the splendid quality of material that makes our offer a great bargain in every case. Every offer is complete. You can finish it up without buying anything extra.

These designs are already stamped on best quality cloth, and every set comes to you complete, exactly as described.

Every one of the designs we are going to offer is new and up-to-date, and nowhere else can you secure the same, as they are made exclusively for us.

You are sure to find many articles that you want if you watch the Ledger each week, and it is so easy to get them, every woman should have little trouble in getting almost every one.

Canada—Single subscriptions, $1.50; Blade and Ledger, $3.00 the year.



No. 131, Mammoth Transfer Outfit.

NO. 131, MAMMOTH TRANSFER OUTFIT.—This mammoth transfer outfit contains the following articles: One punch work needle; one bone stiletto; one package of "Never Slip" embroidery needles; and eight sheets of transfer patterns, 18x24 inches each, containing over 150 up-to-date and attractive embroidery designs that are attracting attention among the fashionable and well-dressed ladies. A hot iron rubbed over the back of the transfer pattern transfers the design to the cloth. Among the designs are: New style corset cover; young lady's waist; centerpiece; Dutch collars; pillow case or towel end; bootees; jabots; baby's cap and pillow; handkerchief; sprays; borders; dollies; and complete sets of initials. These are all suited to solid, eyelet, or punch work embroidery. A sixteen page book on embroidery stitches by "Mme. Du Parque," showing all of the simple and fancy stitches of embroidery, will be included in this splendid offer, which we are giving free with a $1.00 year's subscription to the Blade or Ledger.

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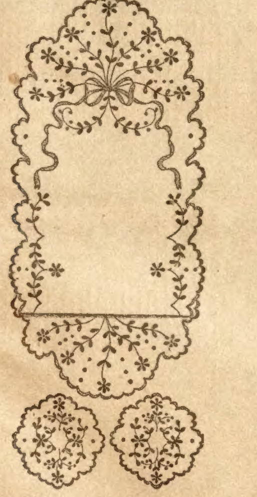

No. 137, Scarf and Dolly Set.

NO. 137, SCARF AND DOILY SET.—This attractive scarf and doily set consists of 1 scarf, size 16x38 inches, and 2 doilies, each size 8½x8½ inches, the whole stamped on linen, including white embroidery cotton for working. We will send it, free of charge, to any one sending $1.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.

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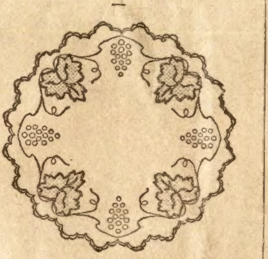

No. 136, Centerpiece.

NO. 136, CENTERPIECE.—This beautiful centerpiece, grape design, is for punch work, solid, outline and buttonhole embroidery. Same comes stamped on pure imported white linen, size 18x 18 inches, including white embroidery cotton for working. You can get this, free of charge, by sending $1.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.

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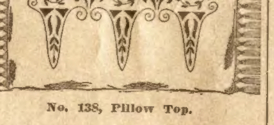

No. 138, Pillow Top.

NO. 138, PILLOW TOP.—This pillow top, conventional design, is tinted on tan art ticking, size 17x21 inches, and includes back and embroidery cotton to outline design. We mail this pillow top free to any one sending $1.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.

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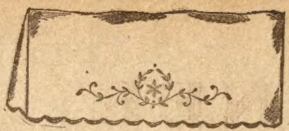

No. 139, Hand Towel.

NO. 139, HAND TOWEL.—This towel end design is for solid embroidery, and comes stamped on huckaback, size 15x 24 inches, including white embroidery cotton for working. Send us $1.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger, and we will mail it to you free of charge.

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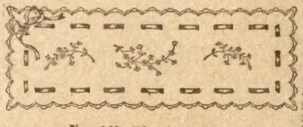


No. 140, Pin Cushion.

NO. 140, PIN CUSHION.—This neat pin cushion design is for solid and outline embroidery. This pin cushion, size, including back, 16x18 inches, come stamped on fine linen, and includes white embroidery cotton for working. You can obtain this, free of charge, by sending $1.00 for a year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger.

* * *

One kind of a nuisance is always telling you that "you ought to take something for that before it is too late."

Too Magnificent.

The first carpet ever seen in East Hampton, Long Island, was in Parson Lyman Beecher's house. One day a little money came from Uncle Lot Benton, the good angel of the Beecher family. With it young Lyman bought the cotton; his wife, Roxana, spun it, had it woven and painted it over in oil colors, with a gay border round the edge and groups of flowers in the center.

When the new carpet was laid down the people were astonished at the magnificence of the pastor's parlor. Good old Deacon Tallmadge, coming one day, stopped at the door, afraid to enter.

"Walk in, Deacon," said the pastor.

"I can't," he answered, "'thout steppin' on't. D'ye think," he added, in wondering admiration, "ye can have all that and Heaven, too?"

* * *

An Interruption.

A certain minister was greatly disturbed by a number of women in his congregation who persistently gossiped in a loud tone during service. One Sunday morning he executed a plan which he had devised to stop this annoyance. At a given signal the choir stopped abruptly on a certain word in the middle of a hymn. Then one of the gossips, unable to check herself, was heard all over the church to say:

"I always fry mine in lard."

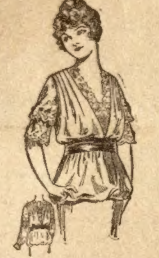
"As we know," announced the minister, "that she always fries hers in lard, we will proceed with the singing."

PATTERN COUPONS FREE!

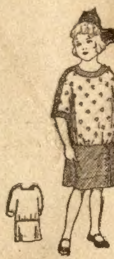
Hundreds of Patterns to Select From

The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

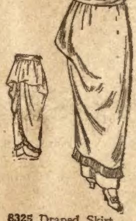
We make a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. **Read our splendid offer below.**



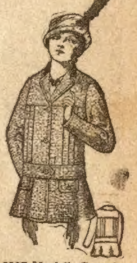
8321 Fancy Bodice with Over-Blouse, 34 to 42 bust.



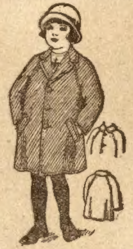
8313 Girl's Dress, 4 to 8 years.



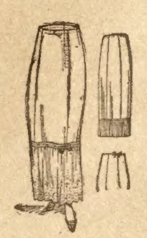
8325 Draped Skirt, 24 to 32 waist.



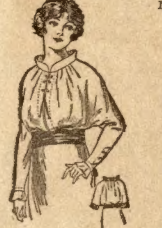
8327 Norfolk Coat for Misses and Small Women, 16 and 18 years.



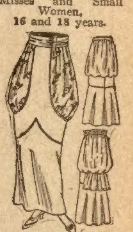
8328 Boy's Overcoat, 2 to 8 years.



8308 Five Gored Petticoat, 32 to 40 waist.



8324 Gathered Blouse, 34 to 40 bust.



8318 Panier Skirt, 24 to 30 waist.

HOW TO GET THE FREE PATTERNS

Here is the way we will do it. To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

We treat old and new customers alike on this splendid offer. If you are already a subscriber, send in a dollar and we will send you the five pattern coupons and extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

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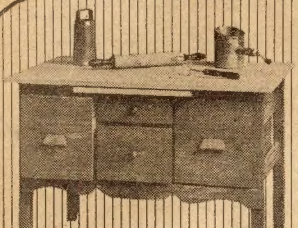
If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) **Coupons good for six months.**

EARN ONE OF THESE VALUABLE PREMIUMS IN ONE DAY



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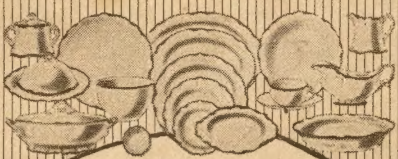

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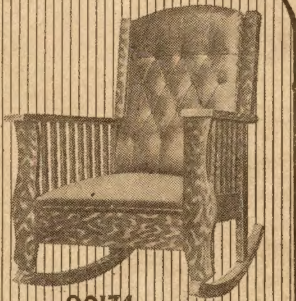

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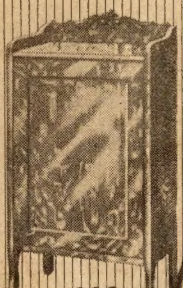
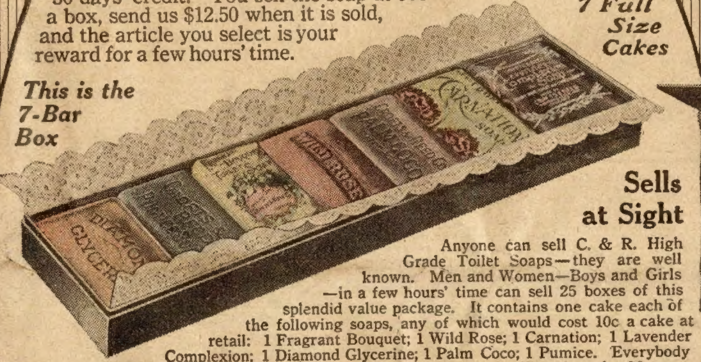


608

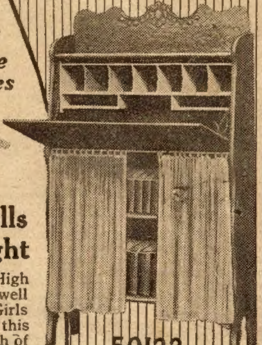
You Can Have Your Choice of Any Article on This Page for Selling Only 25 Boxes C. & R. High Grade Toilet Soaps

We will send any responsible person a choice of any article here shown for selling 25 of our Big Bargain 7-bar Boxes of C. & R. Toilet Soaps. We ask no money down—we send all on 30 days' credit. You sell the soap at 50c a box, send us $12.50 when it is sold, and the article you select is your reward for a few hours' time.



7 Full Size Cakes

This is the 7-Bar Box



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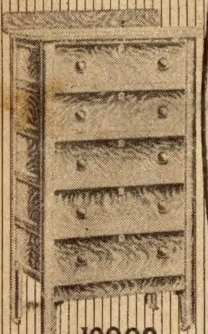


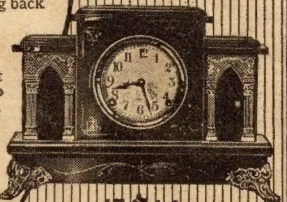
10208

Sells at Sight

Anyone can sell C. & R. High Grade Toilet Soaps—they are well known. Men and Women—Boys and Girls—in a few hours' time can sell 25 boxes of this splendid value package. It contains one cake each of the following soaps, any of which would cost 10c a cake at retail: 1 Fragrant Bouquet; 1 Wild Rose; 1 Carnation; 1 Lavender Complexion; 1 Diamond Glycerine; 1 Palm Coco; 1 Pumice. Everybody has heard of C. & R. High Grade Soaps. We have been making and selling them for 26 years. They sell at sight—give the best of satisfaction. We take all the risk—take everything back at our expense if you are not perfectly satisfied.

Send No Money—Just The Coupon

We don't want you to send us a penny in advance unless you want to. Just fill out the coupon—tell us the name and number of the article you want and we will ship soap and premium at once. Write your name plainly and be sure to give references, so that we will not have to delay shipment. When goods arrive, show the soap to your friends and neighbors—they'll be glad to buy because of the high quality and big value. Many earn a premium in three or four hours. It's actually surprising how easy it is to earn a handsome chair, desk, couch, mirror, or any of the articles shown here.



15044

Write in the Name and Number of the Article You Want

When you fill out the coupon, be sure to write in the name and number of the article you want from the following list:

- **40511—Kitchen Cabinet**
- **16016—Dinner Set**
- **90174—Upholstered Rocker**
- **608—Music Cabinet**
- **10208—Oak Chiffonier**
- **50122—Writing Desk**
- **28036—Oval Mirror**
- **15044—Mantel Clock**
- **63031—Ladies' Raincoat**
- **2059—Drop Side Child's Crib**
- **2901—Fine Mattress**
- **7094—Convertible Couch**

Be first in your locality to earn one of the above handsome premiums. Remember, we take all the risk—take everything back if not all satisfactory—give you 30 days to sell the soap and make returns to us. Fill in and send the coupon today.

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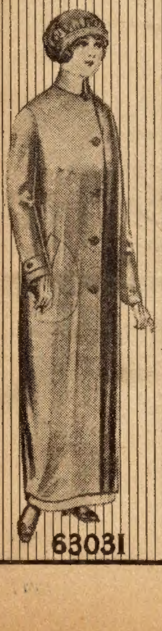

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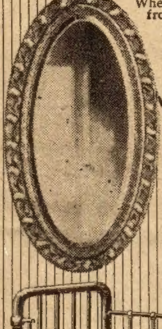

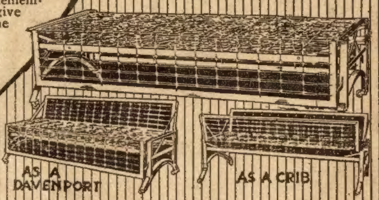

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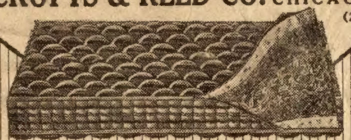

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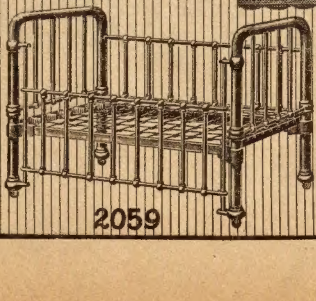

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CROFTS & REED CO., Dept. A 445, Chicago

Please ship to my address twenty-five 7-bar Boxes of Assorted Soap and article No. ....

I agree to pay the freight and sell the Soap at 50c a box and send you $12.50 within 30 days.

Name ....

Address ....

P.O. .... *State* ....

I refer you to the following business men of my town:

Name ....

Business ....

Name ....

Business ....